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NIGHT AND DAY

THOUGHTS.

IN PROSE,

ARRANGED TO LOOK LIKE

VERSE.

“ Who least affecting * * * *
Write as they feel, and feel but as they write,
Bear witness.”—BYRON.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY EDWARD RAINFORD,

86, HIGH HOLBORN.

1843.

PRINTED BY RICHARD AND JOHN E. TAYLOR,
RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET.

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NOTE.

THE Author, warned by a very just critique in the Spectator of December 24, of the almost entire absence of metre in his so-called SONNETS, wishes at once to say, the object of his writing them was not to make the least pretension to poetry, but to reveal himself as the thought rose to his mind, aiming at clearness of expression, with no other imitation of the Sonnet than mere rhyme implied. In one or two instances the effort was made to attempt to rise to the dignity of that most difficult of all compositions, but feeling the effort hopeless he abandoned it, as the loose style he supposed would at once have proved. This is not stated to disarm a just criticism, but to vindicate himself from the imputation of folly to those who know him. The title should have been, "*Thoughts in Prose, arranged to look like Poetry*;" and one to this effect was printed, but was thrown aside, from the idea that the work would explain itself.



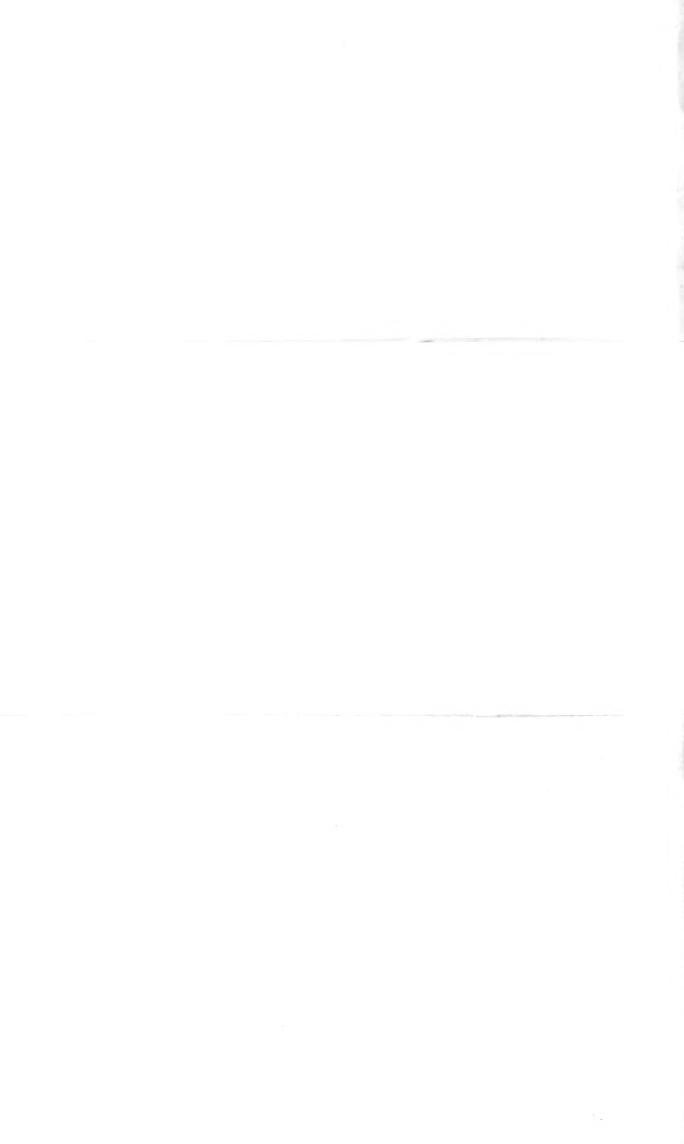
*Ye critics ! toiling for your daily bread—
O'er weekly emanations from the Muse,
Doing your allotted task—to accuse
Or acquit Authors ; who are seldom read ;
Consigning them to such fame as you may
Give, or to oblivion, I commit
These Thoughts to your caprice, prone to submit
To whatever fate, whether grave or gay,
Your whim or judgement may decree to me,
The shadow of a shade ! or praise, or blame,
Or e'en neglect to shadows are the same.
I have beguiled some idle hours by the free
Indulgence of my pen, and with all due
Submission, I resign it now to you.—*



ERRATA.

Page 62, line 11, *for* moon *read* mora

Page 67, line 7 from bottom, *dele* since



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SONNETS.

IF I have advantage o'er my fellows
In anything, and Heaven knows I covet
None, for, tho' fond of home, I would gladly rove it
O'er the world to share it, as it mellows
E'en unripe fruit to my taste, to hear those
Fond of sweetness, boast of their vine and fig-
Trees bearing, it is that I seldom dig
Deeply into consequences, but lose
My interest in action, which, being
My own, I take care of, and let the fates
Make of it what they choose, since from old dates
I'm satisfied there is no foreseeing
What they intend to do.—I have tried such
Now and then, but it ne'er profited much.

There is no relief to o'erstrained feeling
To be compared to tears, and I often
Weep, quite unconsciously, and thus soften
Not my temper only, but the dealing,
Hard at times, of fate. When one casts a look
Back on life at fifty, and remembers
Friendships, lost or estranged, the cold embers
Of which strew our memory, and which took
Away some cherished portion of our joy,
Leaving recollections that come o'er us,
Sad to meet, when the prospect before us
Perhaps is darkened by some new alloy,
'Tis sweet to feel the pressure eased away
By tears, too oft the wretched's only stay.

I may be what is called fastidious
In my taste, finding it impossible
To look on modern wit as passable ;
Tho' oft considered such, insidious
Or not disguised its tendency to wrong.
Pretensions I deny to levities,
To the high claim, as if the sanctities
Of thought or feeling, outraged by the tongue
Of jesters, admitted profanation,
Without the penalty of scorn. I know
Nothing, kindling the heart into a glow,
So readily as wit, when its station,
From the throne of genius, like Shakspeare,
Demands the reverence of all who hear.

That I have faults, and should of course suffer
For them, I admit; paying to the full
The penalty; but I wish that some dull
Fools I meet with, who have a much rougher
Skin than has fallen to my share, could but know
How I wince under the lash of conscience,
They would spare the stripes of their insolence;
As if consequences were ever slow
To follow folly in her transgressions.
I have done the world no harm, nor any
In it; or if I have, let the many
My superiors make their confessions;
And I have no great skill in prophecy,
If their merit o'er mine would soar so high.

To enjoy the blessings we have in store,
Comforting ourselves with their abundance,
The fond hope too of their continuance,
Is at least praiseworthy—to say no more.
There seems such positive good in this kind
Of easy existence, with its license
To do what we choose, giving one a sense
Of independence, and a cheerful mind.
Yet all this is the root of much evil;
As Eden, with its good things in plenty,
Was to poor Eve, who had no rent to pay,
So went from home, listening to the devil.
I believe that tale, so like our own; and her
Sad fate should be a motive to deter.

It is an enviable quality,
That of silently bearing pain. We save
Our friends much inconvenience, and have,
Not the less assured, the reality
Of their sympathy, for they see our state,
But deeming it irremediable
For the moment, think it endurable
Perhaps more, by leaving it to its fate.
I wish all were of this mode of thinking ;
It would spare some words, and leave the tenor
Of our thoughts unbroken, nor make one sour
At times, to have them called upon, sinking
Their tone to the level of some fretful
Plaint. I often feel at this quite spiteful.

In this cold world, to have the vermilion
Hue of hope alone for fuel, is less,
Taking the frosts of life at a rough guess,
Than would serve aught but a chameleon ;
And he, happy fellow ! has the fresh air
To live on, and may have some hope beside.
One is apt, as fate often does betide,
To envy that all-aërial fare,
So difficult is it to get a food
More substantial. I would gladly feed on
Hips and haws, but the birds, poor things, breed on
Them ; and wheresoe'er one turns for a good
Meal, to be fairly earned, we have
No place often to move in, but the grave.

There are some men, who, like the labourers
In the vineyard, are not called till a late
Hour to work for themselves within the gate
Of the garden of our faith. Favourers
Of good, and useful pioneers in truth
Of various kind, they practise what some
Only preach ; but, whether working the sum
Of other knowledge, partial from their youth
Upwards to it, they get results all clear
And beautiful, and think religious themes
Obscure and mystical, it often seems
To me they make mistakes, from the great fear
Of being thought like those, whose profession
Of faith argues alone its possession.

In the list of maladies there are two
Omissions, not creditable to schools
And colleges, tho' I fear by their rules
Incurable ; and perhaps this the true
Reason why all nosologists have failed
To mention them—tho' they send to the grave
Thousands, who vainly make efforts to save
Themselves, the world not knowing they have ailed.
There is a heavy sinking of the heart,
And an aching worry of the brain—oft
Working together to wear out the soft
Texture of our being. Death has no dart
Than these more fatal, tho' their poison fails
At once to kill, and therefore tells no tales.

There is no caprice in the circumstance
Around us; and would it were otherwise!
For then, in spite of my deserts, the rise
And fall of Fortune's wheel, might by some chance
Do me good. 'Tis true that blanks and prizes
Are what she deals in, but mankind have strange
Propensity to hope, and so arrange
Their expectations, that before their eyes
Good luck is ever dancing: I have had
My visions, but the fairest ones have fled;
And looking on the world as established
By law and order, feeling myself bad,
Proud, selfish, in fact uniformly low,
Chance might afford me a stray hope or so.

If to expect it were reasonable,
Or wise to wish for impossible things,
Pleasure from pain, much of it from the stings
Of wasps for instance, the treasonable
Folly of mankind would find some excuse.
One would suppose men play about the nests
Of hornets, on purpose to tempt the pests.
But the fact is, that their love, too profuse,
Of rambling, sports, and flowers, is so blind,
They do not see the dangers flying round,
Till the poison, lurking in them, is found
Even at last to vitiate the mind.
The old adage of the snake in the grass
Would warn them, if they did not let it pass.

I cannot explain the diversity
Of sentiment between many dead men
And their biographers. Reading often
Lives, full of letters, the perversity
Of view puzzles me. In this world the one
Were sad sinners, by their own confession ;
Tho' they did not seem so : their profession
Clerical perhaps, rather strict in tone.
They lived lamenting, oft died despairing.
But no sooner has the grave closed o'er them,
Than some confessed sinner too a poem
Writes in prose on their virtues, comparing
Them to saints ; leaving me to hope in fear
That the poor fellows made some mistake here.

I know it's wrong, and argues ignorance
Of what is called Theology, but I
Reverence human nature in the high
And low, and to me there's no difference ;
Except that I reverse the ranks, placing
The many in the front, the few in rear.
The one gain the victory over fear
And doubt : all lines of beauty their tracing ;
Their's the true charity, the widow's mite ;
All usefulness in art, the achievements
That amaze the world ; tho' they've no hatchments,
Poor fellows ! after death ; which is all right.
Of the few, I scarcely know what to say,
The Prodigal, or Boaz their chief stay.

How seldom do we find the thing we want !

Lost, or mislaid, or not yet acquired,

Seeking for it, till we are quite tired,

Vexed, or dispirited, in every haunt.

I am quite unlucky at these losses,

And the fatigue I suffer wears me out

Very often more than walking about,

Which is my profession ; for the crosses

Of my fate make my other practice small.

It is happy for me, that my poor thought,

Which often loses itself, when it ought

Not to stray, picking up dreams and hopes, all

Moonshine, comes back to its old resting-place,

To supply the things I so vainly chase.

There is something in success, distasteful

To my mind, or heart, or both ; I never

Feel elated by it, but I sever

From me some high thoughts, and thus prove hateful

To myself. Few need it more or have known

It less. But in all conditions there is,

Or seems to be, at times some boon, or miss

Of ill, that in the humblest state, men own

For reeompence of merit, or for wealth,

The spirit of their dreams by day and night,

Of the poor at least ; and they thus lose sight

Of dependence upon Heaven ;—then by stealth

The last refinement of their nature goes,

Driven without rudder o'er this sea of woes.

I like to see the ordinary claims
Of life laid quite aside at times, the brain
Freed from those jealous interests which wind
About it, stifling all its nobler aims.
As if marts of any kind were the sphere
Of action for the soul, and ambition
Had no other pride or occupation
Than cupidity,—all mere rivals here
In lucre! I hate that gilded evil
Money in any shape; its touch pollutes
Me; and there are times I could envy brutes
For their clean paws. I suspect the devil
Has thrown off the shape of mists, and bank notes
Or gold are now the fashions of his coats.

Tho' I have had of life experience
Now for fifty years, and begin to look
Grey, to feel quite conscious I must brook
Many things, at least unpleasant; a glance
At others reconciles me to my fate:
Not that I do not see in and about
Them much I had aimed at, and in some rout
Lost, to the great damage of my estate;
But I have found at last security;
Which, of life the secret, they have to find.
They have more than can centre in the mind,
Exposed to thieves; while my prosperity
Is so internal in its resources,
I have nothing out of it for losses.

There are some, and I am quite unable
To help myself, I despise heartily,
Miscreants who treat still more martyrly
The unfortunate. To sit at table
With these miserables, who, Dante says,
Never truly live, takes off appetite.
Tho' it is not in our nature to bite,
I feel the tiger in me. What delays
Their doom below I know not, if it be
Not, that to feel to charity unknown,
To have no visitations, all one's own,
Of soft compassion,—'mid their needs to see
The good honoured, the pure at peace, the kind
Loved, gives of hell some foretaste to their mind.

Most people find it difficult to know
Their minds; not at all so that of others:
The great complexity of things bothers
Them so. To mend the matter, they bestow
Upon themselves a little more; at least
I often do so, and how to choose between
Two evils, for good is but seldom seen
By me, as an offering of fate, east,
Or west, or either point of the compass,
I know not where to turn, for there are clouds
O'er each horizon, and I hear aloud,
Or fancy, distant thunder: till it pass,
I wait in some perplexity; and thus
Life passes, fruitless, in a constant fuss.

Of all power I know none so resistless
As words, which, once combined fitly, work more
Miracles, than Nature has in her store-
House to display. But still I must confess
They mortify me at times, in their tone
So jarring to the ear, when some loved voice
I hear, "out of tune and harsh"; with no choice
Left me to escape to peace. When alone
I seize some book; or a pithy sentence,
Engraved on memory, occurs to me,
And, like oil on the waters of the sea
Heaving, I subside to rest: and it's hence
I'm fond of sayings, new or old, and trite,
For they do me good, and oft lead me right.

I think it is Malcolm, in his Persian
History, who says, that upon a scroll,
On the tomb of one of the kings, there stole
On him this maxim; which with aversion
At first I read, but the philosophy
Of which has still grown upon me the more
I muse over it; and those who their store
Of happiness would prize, will lose no fee,
Beyond a moment's patience, in listening
To it. It was this,—“Make it a habit
To be happy.” True! and I would have it
Remembered that all virtue is glistening
There; for happiness has no foundations,
Save those of virtue, for men or nations.

That deep Persian maxim comes before me
With the more effect, from the place on which
It was enrolled. It was as if the rich
Flood of light, that poured, after the stormy
Scene of life, upon the Emperor's view,
In that world where he found alone the true
Dwelling together, he could not endure,
Without doing what Dives wished to do :—
Returning to his brothers, that he might
Warn them, nor leave them to the law alone ;
And for his misdeeds that he might atone,
His spirit on its mission fled by night
To earth, and on his tomb inscribed the thought,
That would secure their welfare, which he sought.

I am vexed with myself for being cross
At times, when there is no other reason
For it, than smiles being out of season
With me I have none to offer—a loss
I cannot help—and painful—but tho' I
Feel it as such I have no right to make
Others do so. This is a great mistake,
Which to correct entirely I try
In vain. I get punished for it sorely,
For I think sharp words and peevish tones are
Catching, like catarrhs ; and I have to bear
The hoarseness of others, I have made poorly.
This aggravates my symptoms ; and to blame
But myself, adds vexation to my shame.

Alas! the playful confidence of youth,
Its scorn of counsel, hatred of control,
Its rash impatience, and its pride of soul,
Relying on its strength, and love of truth!
There is a glory round its sunny brow,
Dashing the clouds and mists of doubt away,
While meanness shrinks before its pure array
Of motives. Alas! would that it could grow
To full maturity, like the sweet flower,
Type of its purity, nor canker blast
Its bloom, nor frosts the hope of seed at last!
It should be so, nor obstacles have power
To loose its hold on virtue, or deform.
The sapling hardens to resist the storm.

I wish that philosophers, who talk so much
Of wisdom, would but show the way to win,
Or rather keep it, for it is no sin
To say that now and then I have a touch
Of it, as it comes hovering o'er me,
To light perhaps a moment on my brain.
But I feel that it soon takes flight again
And that all my knowledge is but folly.
Consistency in anything is above
My reach; and though I hear of others set
As examples of it o'er me, I yet
Have to find fidelity to the love
Of truth, a quality so very rare,
That I doubt if it exists any where.

There is a mirth, which makes or leaves me sad,
Exhibited, when circumstance has left
No thought of such relief, and tho' bereft
Of calmness, such it seems awhile. The mad
Betray themselves in tone or manner soon,
And here a recklessness of feeling tells
A tale at least of woe, and quite dispels
Illusion. I know not whether the moon,
Which is proverbial for crazing men,
Makes them miserable, or what it is;
But that there's an influence in cities,
And perhaps elsewhere, fatal too often
To their peace, I know; and you may see it
In laughter,—for thus they try to flee it.

Nothing is more common than to hear men
Ascribe their misery to this or that
Cause, seizing hold of some circumstance, pat
To their use; which, not of their seeking, then
Must be intrusive, and in consequence
Disagreeable at least, if not more.
Some suppose that poverty is the bore,
Not knowing the poor, or by inference
Only. I am satisfied that their state
Is natural to them; for who, seeing
An inch beyond his nose, not blind being,
Will hunt about for causes, when their fate,
Cast in a perishable world, is clear,
Cultivating no faith, or that in fear?

Though I had my pride, like a cloak to warm
Me, when I felt the chills of circumstance,
Especially of neglect, for instance,
It has, like my poor garment, by the harm
Of time, got threadbare ; and in my old age
I feel cold, as I was not wont to do.
Of its defences I made, now I know,
Too frequent uses in my youth, not sage
Enough to see it must wear out ; and I
Feel mortified to think that, when I put
It on, doing me little service, but
To expose to myself my poverty,
The world perceives it too, and passes by,
Casting on me but cold looks of pity.

There are few better monitors than dogs,
More christian than the half of human kind :
At least there are not many you will find
So humble, and more faithful none. Mere clogs
Of clay, senseless most men appear to all
Appeals of kindness from their Master's love :
While the poor brute, ever watchful to prove
His gratitude, bounds joyous at the call.
Death, truly an oblivion, is so
Too oft to more than those who die, the ties
Of kindred severing to the thought. Let eyes
Look on the contrast, as the pictures show
By Landseer, of the Lurcher, o'er the bier
And grave of him he pines again to hear.

I am not, nor would affect, the martyr.
Hunger, and cold, and nakedness have no
Attractions, e'en poetically so ;
To say nothing of contempt ; the barter
'Twixt the world and poor, who make the exchange
Unwillingly, but must submit to it,
Be they sinner, saint, doctor, or poet.
But why do the prosperous, in their wide range
O'er the pleasant places of this mixed life,
Pick up but nettles, thistles, briars ? weeds
Ill sorting with their state ; serving no needs
But to sting or scratch ; causing pain and strife.
One often marks sweet-scented flowers on those,
Who, having nothing else, thus soothe their woes.

My restless thought ! Why wander so from home,
Seeking throughout the world content to find,
As if it dwelt elsewhere than in the mind ?
There is no abode, be it vaulted dome,
Palace, castle, tower, grotto, wood, or cot,
No lawn, field, mountain, valley, slope, or plain,
No shore, or billow on the heaving main,
That in itself contains what thou hast not.
Go freely forth, bearing the pearl you prize,
And range observant o'er the earth and sky ;
Mark all conditions, fortunes, destiny,
Without envy, lavish of smiles and sighs.
Thou wilt return more placid than before,
And bear your trials as you never bore.

I suspect that physic is not the cure
For many maladies in which it's given,
And that, if omitted, to be driven
So soon in hearses, men would not be sure.
Could we find out the secrets of the dead,
Or of many living, we might correct,
What neither friends nor doctors could detect,
Some mistakes into which they had been led.
We should learn, perhaps, that there are cases
Of surgery, in which the mind or heart
Gets out of joint, and death ensues in part
From mortification ; that the basis
Of other losses, was a slow decay
Of hope, wasting vitality away.

There are some things about a prosperous man
One might envy, if the feeling, under
Any shape, did not at once sunder
The mind from its better thoughts. I would fan
The embers of my self-esteem, lest they
Expire in the ashes in which they lie.
One cannot look up proudly to the sky,
Robbing, in thought, another of a ray
Of light, hanging like a cloud about him.
But I confess it makes me sad to think
How poverty has an effect to sink
One's consequence, making e'en love look dim.
I covet neither lands nor gold, but I
Wish I had some old glances of the eye.

I pity all on whom the weight of care
Oppressive falls ; the serpent folds of fate,
Resistless, winding round their hapless state,
Nor spirit meet captivity to bear.
There is no dungeon like the open sky,
With liberty to roam abroad at will,
Inextricably still involved in ill ;
No other prospect opening to the eye
Than weary days and restless nights, with dreams
Of joy, which pass like shadows o'er the mind,
Leaving no lingering cheerful trace behind,
No sweet society in sunny beams—
All lonely, dark ; save that prophetic light
From heaven, struggling through the shades of night.

I have read somewhere of a character,
Common in the world, in which selfishness
Showed itself in its appropriate dress,
While all the time assuming the actor
Of a different part. These fools are like
The ostrich, who, when pursued, if it can
Hide its head is satisfied ; as if man
Its huge proportions could e'er fail to strike,
In derision of its silly cover.
Like all folly, the instance is for good ;
For it shows the vice so well understood
By its victim, that its meanness over
A veil is thrown, so open in texture,
That one can detect the real feature.

There is nothing so profitless—of aught
But weariness and disgust, as pleasure
Out of season ; yet some, beyond measure,
Believing in its promise, have no thought
Beyond its barren haunts ; and tho' they reap
Tares as the harvest of their industry,
Still sow their seeds again, as they must try
Some antidote to ennui, to keep
Its slow poison from working in their veins.
They die of it at last, or something worse,
Thus get rid of what to them was the curse
Of life ; and not a memory remains
Of their usefulness ; a sad memento
I fear in that country to which they go.

Some people are fond of riding hobbies,
Like old Monkbarns with his antiquities,
Not seeing they are the antipathies
Of all to whom they address themselves. These
Enthusiasts appear so exclusive,
That one is apt to o'erlook their better
Qualities, judging them by the letter
Of their discourse, which is oft delusive.
Let any one, patiently enduring
The absurdities of Scott's old hero,
Look beneath them, he'll soon find the zero
Of his estimate rise, so alluring
Are the warmth of heart, and the enlarged span
Of the affections of the good old man.

I often get weary of my pursuit,
Nor know where to turn for sure enjoyment.
Books are distasteful ; and no employment,
I can think of, promises what will suit.
I feel discouraged with myself at last :
For I have wit enough to see the fault
Is mine ; and that beneath the azure vault
Of heaven, there is a bountiful repast,
And that he who cannot partake of some
Portion of it, to starve alone is fit.
These fantastic moods, to which I submit
At times, in my intervals of ease come
O'er me ; for care, to which I oft am prone,
Is energy sufficient to atone.

'T is said, 't is better to give than receive :
No doubt ; but the generosity lies
With him, who, feeling life's necessities,
Takes with a pure spirit, prompt to perceive,
In alms, the benefactions of a heart,
Shower'd more lavish on itself than him.
Why should the too-sensitive sufferer dim
The lustre of a joy, placed all apart ?
Or to visit hours, silent and alone,
Made sleepless by misfortune, when the chord
Of sympathy is mute, or the discord
Of the world, or some grief has jarred its tone.
For then the sweet thoughts of our usefulness
Come o'er us ; and refusals make them less.

If it be true that there is a something
In the misfortunes of our friends not so
Displeasing to us, I must say I know,
To our nature so humiliating,
Nothing. But 'twas the remark of an old
Courtier, in a scene, sensual and low,
Where favours of a despot, by a bow
Of base servility, were bought and sold.
The sarcasm might be applicable there ;
As in the world, where friendship, but a name
Merely, is unknown, to see some, whose aim
Is selfish, miss the mark, may task no care.
But where the claims of love are understood,
Such fiendish thoughts will never dare intrude.

I am fond of summer with its early
Light and warmth, and lavish bloom : for I feel
Free in function, and its genial heats steal
O'er me with an influence so clearly
Beneficial, that while others the shade
Prefer in city-side walks, I delight
In the sun ; and with broad elbow-room right
Onward go, rejoicing. When flowers fade,
And yellow autumn brings her store to stock
With ricks, new thatched, the farm-yard, I decline
In temperature ; and as from the line
The sun recedes, setting at six o'clock,
Sadly I hear the bell of muffin-boy,
That autumn curfew to my parting joy.

Those who are fond of themselves overmuch,
Watching of indulgence the means and ways
By instinct, are sensible it betrays
Their meanness, and have about them a touch
Of virtue ; so much of it, at the least,
As hypocrisy implies. Who has read
Mansfield Park will remember that ill-bred
Mrs. Norris, in woman's clothes, a beast
Of the tame hyena breed ; a savage
Greedy and gross, preying on all around,
Cowardly, the timid chiefly, as found
Least like to oppose her usual ravage.
The portrait was taken from the life, so
Clearly, that the original I know.

If any one, not knowing where to find
Luxury, be at a loss ; his pockets
Being low, his candles in their sockets,
I would advise him to recall to mind
Some nursery he may know, and there go.
Let him gaze on infancy and its smiles !
And he will not traverse tedious miles
'Bout town, to tempt his palate with a show
Of dainties, that will pall upon his taste.
For Heaven will meet his view, as nothing there
More pure or lovely can be seen. That fair
Child has had its benediction. The waste
Of life has no such flower ; tho' many bloom
O'er all, none so exquisite in perfume.—

What a ceaseless warfare, never lulling,
 Like the fitful gusts which howl in winter
 Storms around our chimney-tops, and splinter
 Oaks, the pride of some village-green, dulling
 The ear with tumult, and stout hearts paling
 With alarm—is this life, so full of woe,
 From pain, disease and death ! mining below
 The fairest surface of our hope ; failing
 Us at last, to sink in utter ruin.

No exception nor escape, no charmed spot,
 Where sighs, tears and groans of anguish are not,
 And fond hands some bier with flowers strewing !
 Can there be doubts about religion's truth ;
 Its hope, promise, solace, in age or youth ?

Men are always seeking stimulus, while
 It lies before them, if they would but see
 It. The poor sailor, in a gale at sea,
 Finds it in his duty ; for the green isle
 Of his far hopes would fade upon his view,
 If he neglected that which was to save
 Him from the gulph beneath. The storms which rave
 Around us all, of passion, from which few
 Are free, of interest, none, to the same wreck
 Expose us ; and he who feels life's demand,
 Itself a voyage to a far-distant land,
 Will not desert his post upon the deck,
 But, looking danger in the face, will dare
 To do all, in truth, that may claim his care.

There is no race, except the Esquimaux,
That I know of, who have not found some means
Of getting drunk, and they, for want of beans,
Or grape, or corn, are obliged to forego
This relief of care. I never have been
Told that oil or blubber serves any turn
Except that of appetite, though they burn
The one for light and warmth, and have been seen
To drink the lamps dry, for food merely.
Whether their cares be less than ours, I know
Not; but it would seem, if they are not, that to
Drown ours, is not necessary clearly.
Nor perhaps are the seal-furred northern boors
In philosophy our inferiors.

I do not approve the use of brandy,
Whiskey, gin, rum, punch, or wine in the young,
For I have known many a noble stung
To death by their poison; ever handy
On tables, served on trays, chiefly at night,
Or after dinner. The habit may grow
By use: and I would have our youth to know,
That the noble I allude to, by right
Had no hereditary honours given
To them by ancestors, but that they earned
Fame, rank and affections: for they were learned
And honoured in their prime, thro' powers from Hea-
Evil came o'er them at last, and they died [ven:
Drunkards,—their early promise thus belied.

I wish artists had more taste : they might have
More influence over that of others ;
My comprehension it often bothers
To find out why genius should be a slave
To any thing under Heaven. It was lent
For high purposes, nor prostituted
Should be ; and I could wish substituted
For Venuses and the like, only meant
For mythologists, moral subjects traced
In forms and hues of beauty, to refine
And elevate the mind. I oft repine
O'er talents wasted,—canvass too defaced.
Leslie's Martha and Mary I admire,
And o'er his good Sir Roger never tire.

There are way-side flowers whereso'er we pass,
Which, like the lilies of the field, suggest
Deep thoughts, and reaching far, within the breast ;
Mysteries in the very blade of grass,
That may well make us pause ; with connection
'Twixt the air—the food—health and life of man.
We cannot move nor gaze, but the great plan
Of Nature gives the mind prompt direction
Upwards to its source ; and I need no rare
Exotic, tho' beautiful, too often
Ministering to mere display, to soften
Asperities, or blunt the edge of care.
The humble sedge contents me. I see
In it all that eye can reveal to me.

I seldom smile and very rarely weep,
Unless some incident or other touch
My feelings. To observe how very much
The poor are tasked, causes at times some deep
Emotions. One is apt to be almost
Sentimental or bilious, when a brute
You hear, drunk with prosperity, salute
An honest fellow, labouring at his post,
With harsh abuse, lest a moment's gossip
Or rest should rob him of his money's worth
Of toil. I have known such, not of high birth,
And e'en a woman ! It is a toss up
Between such a ——, but I will not say more,
Only I wish they would respect the poor.

How different the world within to that
Without ! The one all concord, or if peace
Be broken, one can get a calm release
From tumult, on one's own terms ; while the flat
Contradictions in the other provoke
The temper ; which gets ruffled too
By vain pretensions,—assertions not true
Nor probable,—schemes ending all in smoke.
This explains why the reserved do not shine
In mixed society, and are thought fools
By those who conform to its polite rules.
Nothing perplexes me more than the fine
Things I hear about music, concerts, balls ;
As if life centred in their stifled halls.

Music to touch me must be in its tone
Plaintive, breathing compassion, tenderness
And love. I have no ear for tumult, less
Than that of ocean or the storm. The lone
Booming of the Bittern, or the twitter
Of the Swallow ; or, on a lonely heath,
Mid fern and gorse, or trees, forming a wreath
Round some high hill-top, where, o'er dew glitter
The eyes of childhood, wooing the fresh air
Of morn, the Ass's bray is sweeter far
Than strains from Italy, amid the jar
Of instruments in hot crowded halls, where
Fashionables resort ; the heart with me
Must be in unison with harmony.

It's an odd idea, that outward dress
Gives sanctity or wisdom higher place
In the world's esteem ; as if big wigs, lace,
Lawn-sleeves, and shovel hats, were more or less
Than stuff, from horses' tails, flax, and beavers.
All good in their way as fabrics, nor rough,
But very fine and costly,—still all stuff.
I suppose the object is, the wearers
Should have some claim to our admiration.
For we are so fond of rich things, that we
Think much of them, and seeing such beauty
On sinners—for, since the Reformation,
Or old Calvin, Bishops and all are so—
We lose sight of their sins in their fine show.

There are some tongues addicted to sarcasm,
Not from any inherent bitterness
So much, as to make their sufferings less,
By easing the o'erburdened heart of spasm.
The accidents of life are apt to bruise
The spirits, which get inflamed, and sometimes
Mortification ensues: and as rhymes
Are the natural products of the Muse
In labour, oft satirical, so words,
Keen and pungent, give remarkable ease
In these, oft female, cases of disease.
No one, addicted to the use of swords,
Would combat seriously with a maimed
Opponent, fencing merely as he 's lamed.

I am oft amused with entertainers,
Making their feasts profitable to their
Own conceit; getting persons, new and rare,
Or rich and great, to be their retainers.
But Lions are not always to be had,
Nor Apes, Bears, nor male nor female Pumas,
And sometimes there are obnoxious rumours
About breed—the quality being bad,
Which sends the poor beast to his forest back.
These feeders are sticklers for condition:
Their own doubtful, it would be perdition
To have it made more so, by any lack
Of gentility in their eaters—hence
They are exclusive in their own defence.

Our affections are often in the way,
Especially when one has been dining
Out, coming home in high spirits, shining
With the good things acquired at the rout.
As I drink no wine, and all food pleases
My palate, for the simplest is enough,
Thro' use, to satisfy me, soft or tough,
It matters not, for either soon eases
Appetite ; I cannot say that dishes
Minister much to my enjoyments, though
I like sufficiency ; but I am so
Much more fond of sympathy, that wishes
Kindly expressed, and some questions asked,
Are pleasant, before one's friends go to bed.

I know not why, without one selfish aim,
I often quail before the gaze of men ;
Unless it be I feel more strongly than
Their hopes and mine are not the same.
The tranquil current of my thought, like streams
Which murmur still, impeded on their way,
Is chafed by precepts it cannot obey,
And life's high objects seem but idle dreams.
Or is it that high energy of will,
Directed to some noble, useful aim,
Awakes within a conscious sense of shame
From claims of duty I may not fulfill ?
And yet I kindle with a quickening glow
At virtue, and in its just homage bow.

I hold tears, in the way of argument,
To be intrusive, like an episode
Not clearly relevant. They lay a load
Too on one's feelings, oft not kindly meant,
For they are shed sometimes in spite or pet,
But whether so, or in remorse or pain,
There is an end of hope that you will gain
Your point, or be at present fairly met.
My way is to lapse into silence, quite
Reconciled to bear the evil I may
Not cure. To recur to it is the way,
Merely to a fresh display ; I thus right
Myself by a due submission, the best
Frame of mind in this world for chance of rest.

Kind aid and solace to my thought, my pen !
Thou mute companion of the silent hour,
In which I've culled the borrowed sweets again
From mead or book, of many a flower.
Couldst thou reveal the secrets of my soul,
Its fervid sympathies with all that's true ;
The glow of feeling that has ranged the whole,
Thy symbol tracing may expose to view.
It might be worth the casual glance of those
To whom thy notes and mine may soon belong !
And thou wouldst then, bright talisman ! disclose
To those I love, what has been mine so long,
The deepening sense of study's soothing power,
To cheer the spirit in its darkening hour.

Of all the pests this world produces,
Gnats, or hornets, thistles, nettles, briars,
There is nothing I loathe more, save liars,
More abominate, as it conduces
To nought but weariness and woe, setting
One's teeth on edge, and jarring on the brain,
Than the discord of the whole croaking train,
Male or female, who have the besetting
Sins of vanity and weakness, too soft
To bear the rubs of life, and prone to show
Their chance abrasions from some scratch or blow.
If their confounded heads were broken, oft
Glad should I be, for to have one's peace marred
By such fools, is particularly hard.

Thou wert doomed to suffer, body and mind !
Thy spirit, so ethereal ! was traced,
Like the Æolian harp, its strings braced
To vibrate to the passing breeze, the wind,
As it sweeps o'er it, awakening each tone,
Plaintive and wild, and all in harmony.
I list, and think I hear the psalmody
From some far aisle, where holy men attune
Their worship to the Source of love ; and high
Thoughts kindle in my breast, soothing to peace
And contemplation, while all tumults cease ;
Wrapt in a calm communion with the sky.
Such thy influence o'er me ; and I feel,
Knowing thee, a joy I cannot reveal.

Let me, above all other boons, be free !

With liberty—large as the range of thought,
Respectful of the rights of all—not bought
By rude licentiousness of will : but be
Free, feeling restraint in whate'er I do ;
From a consciousness, native to my mind,
Or fear, of selfishness ; lest I prove blind
To my own interests ; making mine the true.

I would be free ; the privilege to use
Of humbling my pride of spirit before [soar
Heaven—chaining down my thought, that it but
In prayers of penitence ; I would infuse
Humility, reverence, duty, love
In me, and thus be free at will to rove.

Channing ! thou hast, amid greater boon,
Thy meed of praise, audible to thine ear ;
Far more unexpressed, thou canst never hear !
Emotions, understood by thee, that soon
Subside in gentle bosoms, yet traces
Leave behind, which became incorporate
With their being ; of gratitude, sedate
Tho' fervent, which neither time effaces,
For thy instructions, nor can death remove.
Thou hast unto their spirits given power.
And they discern afar, when tempests lour
O'er them, the refuge, which thy view of love
Divine and Providence revealed to them.
This must to thee outweigh a diadem.

When one computes how long literature
Has been and is, in the estimation
Of the wise, sanctified by probation
Of years, which make us but the more secure
In the unchangeableness of its truth ;
'T is strange our fine old records should be left
Neglected for the new, tho' these bereft
Of sanction, from their quality of youth.
No doubt new facts are precious, but first thoughts
Are best, and, like the Greek architecture,
Rarely equalled : hence I love the texture
Of these noble minds, who in times of droughts
Lived, with less to slake that quenchless thirst
For novelty, with which this age is curst.

I am of no country, save that of earth,
Whose unnumbered millions claim kindred
With me : nor, like some, can I be hindered
By complexion to own my kin, or dearth
Of pedigree ; features alone suffice.
And the poor Afric, the graceful Hindoo,
Brothers of a more sunny clime, are too
Much the victims to oppression's malice
To lose my meed of sympathy. I feel
Their miseries to be in part my own ;
For tho' their chains and sorrows are unknown
In this, my pride of, place, their sufferings steal
Upon me ; and my thought, ranging along
The world, droops where'er it encounters wrong.

Channing ! 'twas inevitable thy scorn
Of Slavery should break forth unrestrained,
And bring reproach upon thee ; well sustained
The obloquy—and yet but fitly borne.
Thy fate has had examples in all time.
They who brave oppression dare all but fear.
The yoke was on thee, for thou couldst not bear
To see thy country shamed ; in every clime
Her name a bye-word—her boasted freedom
Rotten at the core. Faithful to virtue,
To religion's cause, thou wert heard to sue
For justice—all in vain ! 't is but seldom
Granted us, where interests oppose. He
Who loves mercy will bless thy cause and thee.

What ! after nearly nineteen hundred years,
Since Love was sent from Heaven to dwell below,
And its annual bounties round us flow ;
And hourly mercies fill the eye with tears ;
And Liberty has made her onward stride
O'er prostrate ruins of the feudal age ;
And Knowledge spread abroad her ample page ;
And Science oped her massive portals wide ;
And pilgrim ships float o'er the farthest wave ;
And Charity flows free o'er all the earth ;
And temples rise within the forest's girth ;
Rests there a land in which there dwells a slave ?
Shame on that land ! and branded let it be !
The scorn of freemen ! for its infamy.

Clarkson ! thy life has been an act of love ;
One high thought moulding to itself thy mind.
Thy heroic energy leaves behind
Similitude. No effort to remove
Oppression e'er so glorious as thine !
So disinterested ! to serve the slave !
Thou wilt have thy reward. And when the grave
Pillows thy venerable head, a shrine
It will be ; and millions will heir thy zeal,
Be inheritors of thy legacy,
The love of liberty ! supremaey
Of human rights ! and mercy's fond appeal !
Thy voice, trumpet-tongued, has waked in man's
An echo, ne'er thro' time again to rest. [breast

Those who look on religion as a thing
Apart from ordinary life, mistake
Its meaning ; and there are some who so take
On about it, they very coolly fling
Aside most other duties, quite absorbed
In doctrines and their mysteries. St. James
Would make them more practieal, if their aims
Were such. I prefer those characters orb'd
So around with holy influencees,
That you can see nothing of them but through
A medium chaste and pure, with such true
Devotion, when you seek evidenees
Of their faith, too deep for mere profession,
Their whole life exhibits its possession.

'T is sweet in Autumn, 'mid the city's noise,
To hear the Robin's liquid note, speaking
Of peace in rural scenes. How oft, seeking
Man's abode, that familiar bird, when joys
Are waning, and the memory of all
The summer's gladness, fading with the leaf,
Comes, amid cares and tumult, with relief,
The country's placid moments to recall !
'T is ever thus with Nature ! In her stores
There are resources, suited to each want,
Would men but seek them, nor so restless pant
For joys, void as the foam on ocean's shores.
That song has harmonized my mind, when I
Have thought, looking round me, no hope was nigh.

Oh Liberty ! how few e'en dream of thee !
Freedom of rapine bears thy sacred name.
Thy true worshippers know no other claim,
Wearing thy badge of servitude,—the free
Within the confines of thy moral law,—
Than license for good to all, merey, peace.
When will the outcries of oppression cease,
Power be taught pity, and the ravenous jaw
Of human wolves appeased with human blood ?
Just Heaven ! thy promises are over all :
Yet men their brother man in chains enthrall,
And madly dare to look to Thee for good !
While thousands groan beneath their iron sway,
From youth to age, to hopelessness a prey !

Champions of Liberty ! when ye broke loose
From fetters tyranny had forged around
Your limbs, and rose, unshackled, from the ground,
Armed, to defend your rights ; what could induce
Ye, in the sight of conscious Heaven, to leave
Chains, festering deep wounds on your brotherman ?
Still (for seventy years !) beneath the ban
Of cursed oppression, nor hope of a reprieve !
Think ye, in the rude license of your power,
The laws of retribution blotted out ?
Hark ! to that stern, deep, universal shout
Of scorn at your misdeed ! and dread the hour
When outraged justice will assert her claim—
Your land a prey to massacre and flame.

Nothing so immediately excites
The passions of men as near interests ;
And I suppose that in this truth consists
The explanation why religious rites,
Less than politics, inflame their tempers.
It is certain that two men of two creeds
Are much less irascible which succeeds
Than of the Tory and Whig distempers.
This argues more blindness than ill humour,
Tho' enough of both, as if our parties
Could much profit, save those whose art it is
To gain a place. If men would less immure
Themselves in the dungeons of avarice,
They would see what they need with clearer eyes.

I know not why there is an omission
In teaching youth, of the art of living ;
For it seems to me that the mere giving
Book lore is apt to create confusion
When one enters the world, where the moral,
Learned from old philosophy is seldom
Practised : and science leaves us to a doom
More hopeless ; for its laws in the rural
Scene perhaps traced, 'mid purity and peace,
Are most unlike the code of men in haunts
Of cities, toiling to supply the wants
Which pride engenders. We start on the lease
Of life fairly, but the gross ignorance
Of its terms, till too late, ruins our chance.

Boast of your bastard liberty ! ye slaves
To mercenary thought : more abject far
Than the poor captives of the savage war
Ye wage against the world's convictions. Waves
From ten thousand oceans cannot wash
Out the stain on your dishonoured name !
Once the fond hope of nations—now their shame !
Ye noble few ! the free* ! let not the lash,
The chain, the stifled groan, the shrieks and tears
Of parted kindred, sold in marts ! drag down
Your honours, fortunes to the dust. Disown
Connection with oppression. Let your years
Flow on in peace, alone. There is a Power
Above, and tempests o'er your Union lower.

* The free states.

When I hear of novelties, and the fuss
They make, I keep myself, on the whole, cool,
Or temperate ; for I am not the fool
Of earlier years, breathless to discuss
All subjects, as if my health depended
On it. I prize highly all accessions
To our knowledge, tho' I make confessions
Daily, that the old stock, not expended,
More than suffices for my digestion.
I take the new gratefully: to the old
Ally it. But no one yet has e'er told
Me of discovery, whose suggestion
Supplants the thousands I have had before,
Convincing me how feebly I adore.

When I settle with myself what before
Seemed the beggarly sum of my accounts,
I am oft surprised how the product mounts
Up, with so large a balance left in store.
I have much of the miser's keen delight
Too over my treasures ; truly my own :
For no one suspecting me to be prone
To wealth, they leave me to enjoy the sight.
My small expenditure tallies with their
Thought ; and thus I roam at will, with the sky
Above me, the fresh air around,—the high
And broad expanse of nature everywhere ;
Smiling over my possessions, leaving
The deluded to their self-deceiving.

Thou mockery* ! now ! There was an hour—nay,
A few brief years, when heroic hearts rallied
Beneath thee ; and, strong in virtue, sallied
Forth, of liberty the fond hope and stay,
To fight for freedom. Heaven smiled upon them
And their cause. They conquered ; and one long
Of joy from hill to hill re-echoed throughout [shout
Earth. Where that more than regal diadem [chains
That crowned their country ? Gone ! the clank of
Resounds along her vales,—the lash, the cry
Of agony, appealing to the sky !
Thy stars, proud banner ! symbol but the stains
Upon her name ; and all who see thee wave,
Shrink at the thought of freedom, and the slave !

I care not much for pulpits, less for schools ;
Why that science of human happiness,
Religion, should be vaguely taught, with less
Time far devoted to it than your fools,
Composed of Greek and Latin, give to rules
Of syntax, I know not : I hold Horace,
Homer, in all honour ; but since their race
Of glory, a higher far has given tools
Of a workmanship surpassing all time,
Before or since, has wrought ; and that this art
Should be learn'd but weekly, nor set apart
In youth, when the mind is supple, the clime
Genial, the heart fresh, and the soul soft
To receive impressions, puzzles me oft.

* “ The star-spangled banner.”

When rich, I'll found an university,
In which shall be taught all kinds of knowledge ;
The pupils to enter young, with their edge
Unworn and keen, and no perversity
Of temper. My professorships shall be
Natural History, teaching Nature,
The laws, actions, qualities and feature
Of things, near and remote ; the mind to see
Their Author chief in all. Divinity
To follow, proving the revelation ;
Christianity the elevation
Supreme of hope, and love its litany.
This foundation laid, the superstructure
I will raise higher than Babel's tower. .

Education should the whole soul allure ;
Unfolding to us our mysterious
Being,—its object, aim ; the imperious
Obligation of virtue ; the nature
Of the Supreme ; our relation to him,
And dependence on his love ; that we have
Nothing here but an immortal hope, save
His presence, reflected shadowy, dim,
From the magnificence we see around ;
Till we rise to clearer contemplation
In his Word, the sole interpretation
Of that subtle problem, life. With this ground
Ploughed deeply, you may sow all kinds of seed,
And will reap flowers, nor detect a weed.

No one with common sense, that very rare
Endowment, will have any objection
To mirth or frolic, under subjection
To propriety always. If I share
Myself in the amusements of our race
Seldom, I am old, and my vein of thought
Lies in deep strata, and has to be brought
With some difficulty to the surface.
Being of a serious cast of mind,
Grave and rather pensive, my tendency
Is devotional, with little fancy
For novelties, fashions of any kind ;
But my ear, attuned to harmony, knows
No sound so pleasing as joy's sweet echoes.

We are so imitative in our ways,
That it is of great importance to us
To select proper topics to discuss
Before the young, and shun whate'er delays
Or may mislead them in their search for good.
The same principle is applicable
To ourselves, and habits may enable
Us to disarm temptations, or withstood,
Or made the sources of heroic zeal.
When, in the Australian desert, Gray
Was perishing of want, his men a prey
To hopelessness, diseased and worn ; he, leal
In faith, communed with the Scriptures, and there
Found a Spirit that triumphed o'er despair.

To like the titled and their fine estates
Is but natural—in the meanly poor,
Who ne'er can tell but that some lucky door
May open to admit them to their fêtes.
To see a real Lady, or my Lord,
Is not an every-day occurrence ;
And tho' to know would be a preference,
Yet seeing is partly so, and accords
With their love of consequence in the eyes
Of others, less distinguished by their fate.
Nothing is so absurd as to abate
The zeal of these fools in servilities
To the high in station ; and their excess
Of stooping cannot make their stature less.

That there is much uneasiness in the world
Might be inferred, if no complaints were made,
For men show it in their faces, inlaid
With lines of care ; and no wonder, so whirled
About in search of what they seldom find.
The fault is not so much in what they seek,
As their own blindness ; for the pure and meek,
Wandering less from home, see it in the mind.
But this so unsubstantial, that most eyes
Discern it not, and therefore pass its haunts
Unconscious, and to satisfy their wants
Find nothing useful ; which excites surprise.
We are slow to learn, and examples will
Mislead, if many, even tho' they kill.

There are remote analogies in things
Not seemingly allied in any way ;
Suggestive to the thoughtful mind by day
And night, of truth and all the good it brings.
Life viewed in one respect is barren oft
Of incidents to rouse the soul, some one
Or two only in a generation
Tasking any qualities but the soft.
Philosophers assure us 't is the same
With the air and earth ; at least that the sum
Of either is a caput mortuum ;
A principle here and there active, tame
All the rest : from the which I would infer
That the less stimulus is the better.

My life, like a most unprofitable
Labyrinth, at each turn but leads astray.
I wander lost ; beguiled by every way
I most confide in, inhospitable,
Failing me in trust ; and where'er I go
The same fate befalls, as in derision
Of my weariness ; and if my vision
O'er a wider range extends, and I glow
With hope, sudden I feel my mind despond ;
Shut out from light, no path before my choice,
I grope in darkness, startling at my voice,
As echoes of its plaint alone respond ;
I emerge to trace the same round again,
Involved and endless ; efforts are in vain.

Nothing worries me so incessantly
As to see those round my hearth foes to ease.
It is vain to find, or hope aught to please
Or satisfy the mind. If pleasantly
The cause or burden of the grief is made
Mine, by confiding in my love, I feel
The pressure lightened, and as if the weal
I seek was half secured ; amply repaid,
By the exchange of what I did not know
For certainty of ill ; or impending,
Or working within the breast, suspending
Hope's realities or illusions so,
Even in mine, that life seems too real,
Which is no unprofitable trial.

It was said of old that appearances
Are deceitful ; and not a day but gives
Us proof. The bright dazzling of the sun leaves
His spots invisible ; and clearances
Of the weather banish all thought of storms,
Which catch us unprepared, and drench us quite.
Cloaks too often hide many things from sight,
In modern times assuming many forms.
If we could get within them, we might see
Life, with all its elements basily
At work ; many manœuvring slyly
To gain ends, not such as they seem to be.
Why but for evil should men wear a mask ?
Or use, in the sight of Heaven, I would ask ?

Tho' one hears of much that is very wrong
In the world, men are so averse to it,
That it is difficult for the Poet
Moralist to see, what oft in his song
Is depicted for our shunning. In these
Days of much refinement one seldom meets
Vice in all its nakedness in the streets ;
Its professors studious e'en to please.
This should make us but the more cautious ;
For many fellows in fine clothes may be
In grain scoundrels, stealing the widow's fee
Simple, tho', like a lawyer, courteous.
I have known such intruders in the best
Society, and more I fear infest.

ON EDDIS' PICTURE "THE PAUSE."*

What can have subdued to so deep a pause
Those gentle bosoms ? hushed as by a spell !
The world is all without ; and yet the swell
Of some discordant note would seem the cause
Of that most sad abstraction. Twin in youth,
The darker brow more years has known. Perchance
Some hapless tale of childhood, thro' mischance,
Lost to a widowed mother, tells the truth
Of danger, first conceived ! impending o'er
Her hopes, consummated by the Mother's
Joy ; and the contagion o'er the other's
Soul has shot its influence, where before
Bright cloudless visions of a boundless love
Had realized alone our state above.

* In the collection of Lord Francis Egerton.

One gets so discouraged, in the concerns
Of life, by the difficulties we meet
With in the many, from their indiscreet
Zeal in believing what so often turns
Out false, that I abstain from argument,
Leaving to time to operate the cure.
What makes the error harder to endure
Is, that the disposition has a vent
Large in proportion to the damage done
To character by those most rash conceits.
I have at times suffered from these defeats
E'en from fair hands ; but I look on the sun
Not the less joyfully, smiling to see
Him so benignantly shining on me.

Of all the qualities none is quite so blind
As vanity, and hence it is discerned
By others quickly, who have never learned
The art of solving problems of the mind.
Those who have no eyes can even see it,
For it operates on all the senses.
It is often blended with pretences,
To hypoerisy allied ; and be it
Thus observable, mixed with the impure,
It is a compound so detestable,
That one, from hopelessness, is not able
To indulge easily a thought of cure.
The light self-complacency of the fair
Or young wears a very different air.

The affectation of immaculate
Purity has beneath it sensual
Perceptions, or something more immoral.
It is a cloak in which the prude hides hate
And all uncharitableness. I have
Known some learned females whose maiden love
Of meddling argued such a zest to prove
Others wicked, that the veriest slave
To passion would blush to hint to modest
Ears what these purists bring out openly.
Their method is to suggest, brokenly
At first, their doubts of something wrong, nor rest
Until the scandal blazes forth, then sigh
To think their friends, perhaps, sin so sadly.

I would not have any one confident
Of anything, especially friendship,
In this world ; for the tie is apt to slip,
From causes not easily cognisant.
Being a compact between two persons,
Originally of one mind, it holds
Good until that single number unfolds
Itself into twain ; and this, in her sons
And daughters, so close allied, the Mother
Sometimes sees ; and no wonder that the shocks
Of life, which dislocate limbs, and e'en rocks
Splinter, should tear friends from one another.
I am in constancy inviolate,
Fond of old loves ; some turned, alas ! to hate.

There is a kind of mental chemistry
I excel in, that of precipitates
From mixtures, such as the presiding fates
Offer us from their laboratory
Of compounds, which we have to decompose
For our use; the supernatant liquor,
Sour or sweet, or of whatever colour,
The potion we all must swallow. One knows
Little of the ingredients, so mixed
Together; but I get some portion thrown
Off, and others down, by tact all my own,
The residuum then I take off; fixed
In the conclusion, that 't is the best way;
Nor hope to filter all the dregs away.

The story of Ruth has simplicity,
Fidelity, generosity, love,
To recommend it. If men would but prove,
Like Boaz, kind, they would implicitly
Be revered, from every claim of justice:
For when power with goodness is allied,
Evil in any shape may be defied,
Invading the rights of one whose trust is
In his benevolence, largely diffused,
Under circumstances too which imply
A forgetfulness of self; for the high
Might there concentrate it all, tho' abused:
Since their position is above control,
Save that, like Boaz, of a noble soul.

There is something so exhilarating
In a bright morn, with dew upon the grass,
The freshness of the air, the sights which pass
Before the eye, each sense captivating ;
The song of birds, the waving of the trees,
The blue of heaven, so ineffably
Pure ! with light clouds, gracefully
Grouped together, and sailing with the breeze ;
That in spite of care I feel the beauty
Steal upon me ; and feelings I cannot
Communicate rise so to bless my lot,
That worship blended with every duty
Seems inevitable,—so deep, profound,
The sense of Deity in all around !

In the material world we faintly
Trace effects to causes, or what seem such ;
And speak of them as sensible to touch
Almost ; while in the moral, as saintly
Men have said, there are many things too oft
Eluding. That there are shadows flitting
O'er the mind, in its search of truth, suiting
No form of the realities, some soft
Impression made, as shades are apt to do,
Is clear ; but he has made no use at all
Of his faculties intellectual,
Who has not discovered, that the way to woo
Knowledge, is to trust to mere appearance,
Since we get the true but by inference.

Let no one in his dream of life cherish
Hope too far, so vain the bright illusion !
Better to place thy trust where delusion
Cannot be ; for of the things which perish,
None so frail as the fond expectancy
Of good, e'en for services of purest
Motive. But let not thy devotion rest !
Itself to thee the sole sufficiency !
It is the only boon that passeth not
Away, since all beside the accidents
Of time ; and there are incidents,
Linked with virtue, influencing our lot,
That seem casual, but ne'er can be so,
For chance has none so pleasing to bestow.

There are things so familiar that we see
Them not, or only as annoyances
Which mar occasionally joyances,
Like flies, when on our plate they chance to be ;
Or sparrows, fond of the young green of spring,
Defeating hope from seed, sown in gardens,
Whence sundry contrivances, as wardens,
Are resorted to, to make them take wing.
But these modes of separate existence
Are meant for our instruction, to suggest
Thoughts, as all nature does, which cannot rest
Pent up in self ; and he finds subsistence
In more enjoyment than falls to my share,
If the sparrow's chirp does not please his ear.

If men were wise to understand talents
Were alone entrusted for the chief good
Of others, to supply them stores of food,
Not their own aggrandizement, as gallants
Of fame, the world would reap a harvest more
Profuse of knowledge. Of all, the humblest
In self-appreciation, by far first
In responsibility, to adore,
Thro' usefulness, the Supreme, was Priestley !
Noblest of mankind ! He threw pearls away,
Indifferent himself to all array
Beyond that of doing duty meetly.
Hence his reputation has a lustre
More glorious than science can confer.

My Friend ! in the general lot Thou hast
Had no common doom ! entrusted to Thee
Talents of an order we seldom see,
And tastes, that should produce results to last
Through time, adding their influence to aid
The purpose of humanity. Thine art
Is moral, destined to refine the heart,
To seize its loveliness of power, ere fade
The perishable traits we see around.
Thy life but gives a promise to the hope ;
Faithful to obligations ! not a scope
Offered to thy youth, but thou hast been found
True ! obedient to the claims of Son,
Brother, Friend,—not a duty left undone.

It is a stern feeling to cherish hate ;
But I have so learned to love the softer
Sympathies in my age, that I foster
Now no other in my breast ; all too late
For the unforgiving sentiments of youth
To hold their sway ; tho' I have still so much
Of early nature left me, that a touch,
Impressed too roughly, rouses all the truth
Of old emotions, fading soon away
Before a calmer judgement ; and the charm
Disarms e'en malice of its power to harm ;
A moment keenly felt, but not to stay.
I have had my enmities, as my lot
Is now to feel them, but they harm me not.

With all my philosophy I rarely
Am exempt from heart-ache, though temperance
Comes in aid to promise me a fair chance
Of health, since I dine most days but sparingly.
There must be something seated in the brain,
Of a susceptibility so strong,
That whenever the echo of a wrong
Note jars on it the discord causes pain.
Physicians talk of sympathies ; and mine
Probably are of the order restive.
Howe'er it may be, I would wish to live
In harmony with all that can refine
The nature ; and if I should have o'erstrained
The mark, I am perhaps but justly pained.

If men would but learn from high examples,
Of which there are many of the olden
Time and recent, abounding in golden
Consequences, they would furnish samples
Of a workmanship more creditable
To their skill as artists of a moral [all
World, where the threads of circumstances should
Be woven into tissues suitable
To the exigence of an immortal
Soul; serving its necessities, not by
Things of sense, adapted to the body,
But of qualities immaterial,
Spun out of thought, of which the richest store
Is oft found in those who lived long before.

There is too much that is satisfying
In the senses, and many men after
A good dinner, for an instance, rather
Than do anything else, gratifying
A love of ease, compose themselves to sleep.
I am very apt to this indulgence,
As I sit up late, in the effulgence
Of my midnight taper, to write or weep
Alone, easing my heart by either vent
Or both, as it may be. By that small light
I have learned to distinguish, clear to sight,
Some useful truths; and I fancy the bent
Of my mind has received its curve upwards
By this mere habit of stooping downwards.

I seldom feel my humanity more
Than in Autumn, with its dead leaves falling
Round me, all its cold flowers recalling
Brighter days and genial, with their store
Of bloom, and hours passed in sauntering ease,
By some brook-side, or on the verdant bank,
Gazing on the blue heavens,—the world a blank,
As it had never been, with the sweet breeze
Wafting no sound but the songs of birds, or
The hum of insects on the wing, the scene
Beaming with gladness, and wherever seen,
Seeming Paradise and the soul to soar.
But Autumn days remind me all is past,
And of sterner trials to come at last.

It argues a bad temper, when I see
Any one the victim to strong passions,
Roused by trifles ; but there are some fashions
I detest ; so immodest ! that beauty
Should shun them, trifling with its native grace,
And exposing deformity of mind,
Implanted by education, behind
A fair proportion and a lovely face.
In the young, these arts my compassion move ;
In the old, disgust : the one will disown
A fault, originally not her own ;
But the dowager dresses low, to prove
Rank corruption, ere the grave claims its right
To do, what we know it does, out of sight.

The passions I allude to are the storms
 Raised by accidents, such as to childhood
 Happen in its usual merry mood ;
Or, when aiming at usefulness, it forms
Some little plan, which in execution
 Fails ; and the cherubs, in their eager haste
 To show a wish to serve us, make some waste,
Fatal to all hope, by no exertion
Of their own to rise again ; so alarmed !
 And tearful, that they know not where to hide.
 I long to soothe them, and cannot betide
The thoughtless wretch, who, because he is harmed
In some trifle, is blind to their desire
Of approbation, in his savage ire.

Those who carry their aversion so far
 As to sacrifice friendship to their hate,
 Often make mistakes, when it is too late
To repair consequences. In the war
Of civil life, I suspect, that pride slays
 More victims than in the military
 The sword, making many tributary
To some regrets which linger thro' their days.
These losses, unlike those which the grave hides,
 Have a vitality of remembrance
 About them, calculated to enhance
One's misery ; for to see by our sides
Those we have once loved, but must now avoid,
Is but apt to make all else round us void.

When I see youth observant of the claims
Of age, I know of nothing that so much
Commends it to me. It exhibits such
Loveliness that not e'en the highest names
On the roll of fame shine with a clearer
Lustre ; nor so prophetic any deed
Of future blessings on the youthful head.
None perchance remains to be the bearer
Of its honours : the friends of youthful days
Gone ; and with them all evidences
Of a love once active, the tendencies
Of which were ever to elicit praise
Of an eloquence deeper than our own,
Now sinking with the weight of years, alone.

There are some so impatient of restraint,
Who hear dictation with so ill a grace,
That there are occasions when they disgrace
Themselves in the eyes of others, so faint
The semblance of their discretion. I feel
Often the same kind of provocation
With these sinners ; when the avocation
Of some zealot, in his pride to reveal
Some admitted truth, is that of a pert
Preacher, who deals out judgement profusely,
While his own life perhaps pleads uselessly
For the law ; and to spite the coxcomb, dirt,
In the shape of wrong confessions, is thrown
At him on purpose, to enjoy his frown.

My Mother ! when I think on all that Thou
Hast been to me, to others worthier
Of thy love, as near in claim, readier
Far thro' merit, but I cannot allow
From will more earnest, to deserve esteem ;
I grieve that fate unpropitious, else just
To my desert, humblest in its hope, must
Rob me of a joy I had thought might beam
On me, reflecting honour on thine age ;
Such as the parent from her offspring knows.
But let sweet peace go with thee to thy close
Of life ; and if not faithless the image
Of a dream that flits at times before me,
I may be found hereafter worthy Thee.

My Friend ! the sunny clime that gave Thee birth
Imparted to Thee the gift of genius !
Powers for good or ill ! Thro' no tedious
Years of drudgery hast Thou ploughed the earth
For thine increase ; thy ample harvest ripe
In youth ; fame e'en accomplished in thy prime.
And what awaits Thee in the after time ?
Not the dull, tame sufficiencies of life !
The pride and insolence of mere success !
Like others of thy country it must add
Fresh laurels to thy brow, thro' efforts made
In the cause of virtue ! Thou not the less
Distinguished for thy pencil, than the tone
Of moral beauty o'er thy pictures thrown.

When we are following some favourite
Pursuit, in itself innocent, or more,
From its nature good, as when we explore
Truth in her well, loving the exquisite
Things we draw up, and sometimes from our minds—
Deeper wells than these truth never hides in—
It is sweet to meet some one who sides in
Our propensity, and kindly time finds
To look at with us what our bucket draws
Up, and will help us by explanations
Of their own, to solve mystifications
Of which alone we could not find the cause.
The fact is, sympathy, if not the whole
Of happiness, still is to me the soul.

It grieves me when I see a noble mind,
Full of good propensities, generous,
More than just, because never tenacious
Of its rights, when, waving them, it can find
An opportunity to show kindness,
Proving that the courtesies of life have
No obstacles in pride, if it can save
By its own sacrifice, from the blindness
Of another, harmony being lost
By rude collision ; it grieves me to see
Such a nature, like a vessel at sea
Without a compass, the seamen's trust, tost
By every wave, no polar star to guide
It in the tempest, drifting with the tide.

There are two kinds of persons I would shun,
And do so. When the coast is clear, and place
Is otherwise indifferent, no trace
Of me can be found beside them. The one
Is the fault-finder, not to correct it,
But to prove by their own sagacity
Being free, they have a capacity
Of discernment, tho' they oft detect it
In their own meddling only. The other,
The spoilt child of fortune, miserable
From selfishness, ennui, unable
To endure herself, attempts to smother,
Where'er she goes, the hopes the humble feed
Their need with ; well pleased if she can succeed.

There are moments in which the circumstance
Of life presses so heavily on me,
That I cannot suppress the wish to flee
Away, and be at rest, beyond all chance
Of ill. There is a weight upon the breast,
A trouble o'er the brain, I often think
Like frenzy, and I feel my strength to sink,
Nor does my weary thought know where to rest.
I'm sure all woes on purpose revisit
Me at these times, when I can least resist
Them, and my offences seem to insist
On penalties, stern beyond all limit.
The remembrance, too, of some friend's harsh tone
At parting, robs me e'en of pity's boon.

Mary ! what time has failed to do, of ill,
To this fond heart, that, fifty years, within
My breast has struggled on, amid the din
That jars upon the chord, which vibrates still
In unison with thine own, care has done.
And, tho' young, I feel withered as by age,
Like one, whose objectless course on the stage
Of closing human life has almost run.
When my sands have ceased to fall, and I prove
A memory,—that soon to pass away,—
Let some kind thoughts, lingering with thee, stay,
Gilding the past with my remembered love.
Thou ! part of my being ! must ever be,
In death as life, incorporate with me.

My jealous soul brooks no reserve in thee,
Nor feeling, but in which it all may share.
Two wedded hearts abstraction may not bear,
With minds to roam, as if at liberty.
The glance of thought that flashes o'er my mind—
I know of none but all infused with love,
The chain in which my fettered fancies move—
Is vain, unless thy sympathy it find.
My life is mutual, twin with thine own ;
Through thee do all my aspirations rise.
I dare not meet aversion in thine eyes,
Nor censure at my seeming wayward tone.
There's a fearful loneliness about me,
Lost as I am to e'en hope, without thee.

Thy deep maternal tenderness and love
Have equally enriched thyself and thine !
Its own bright recompense ! like rays which shine
On flowers, and reflected thence above.
When thou and I have long since passed away.
As night which spreads on all around a shade
Without affecting beauty day has made,
Thy moral influence will still have sway ;
Reviving in thy grateful children's thought,
Wearing the self-same aspect thou hast worn ;
While I, like some dark cloud upon the moon,
Shall veil the brightness thy effulgence brought.
Yet thou canst say,—companion of my youth
And age, care dimmed but left untouched my truth.

Expression seldom can reveal my thought,
Which finds no semblance in the forms of speech ;
Emotions, which utterance fails to reach,
By thee unheeded, as they came unsought.
Would there were faculties within the soul
To telegraph what passes within mine,
That mental sight and hearing could combine,
Directing, like the needle to the pole,
Thy wayward sympathies to mine alone.
There should be a magnetic force of love,
Were it on earth what it must prove above,
A chord responsive,—echo to each tone.
There is no solitude like that of mind,
Seeking in vain its fellow-heart to find.

I grant that love, or time, or care have cast
A spell upon me, and that now I fail
In power, weary, worn, and poor, and frail ;
But turn to the remembrance of the past,
Nor let the present all usurp thy thought.

Years have admitted power to dim the eye,
And Love's best interpreter is a sigh,
At least in one who finds not what he sought,
Means to protect the objects of his love.

There is a pride that well sustains our life,
To see fond children and a faithful wife,
Secure 'gainst want, save only that above.
This has been denied to me ; and if low,
No selfish sorrow darkens o'er my brow.

Though false the world, let thy fixed mind be true,
Intent upon the aim we all should seek.
Life's paths, though rugged, toilsome, thorny, bleak.
Have Heaven's rest for ever within view.
No clouds should e'er conceal its tranquil blue
To thine inward eye, piercing their thin veil ;
Nor must the world's example e'er prevail
To make thy conscious thought its wrong pursue.
With flowers along our path, and stars above,
The attributes of Deity around,
No selfish thought within, nor jarring sound
Of discord from the well-tuned harp of love,
Life is a constant triumph ; and the grave
At last our refuge, kindly meant to save.

Mary ! our lot—though checkered oft by fate,
As Heaven at times with clouds is darkened o'er,
Deepening its blue intensity, and store
Of light, by contrast ; and to moderate
Its power, too subtle for the claims of earth,
Which may not here aspire beyond the doom
Ordained, of beauty destined to the tomb,—
Has had its moral sun ; and love, the birth
Of all our true and most substantial joys.
It has held on for two-and-twenty years,
Through obstacles, smiles mingling with our tears :
Like gold, unchanged in worth by all alloys ;
Nor time, nor age, nor care must dim its ray,
Nor can eternity our debt repay.

There are lone thoughts I may not share with thee,
Bound as I am to thee, as by a spell ;
Mute, shadowy ones, I should fail to tell
Did I attempt to woo thy sympathy.
It must be so with every conscious mind,
From that doom, inevitable ! to die.
Within my bosom's dark recesses lie
Fragments of power, which were once designed
For airy structures of a self-esteem,
Slowly to rise, through energies of youth,
Conceived in all the loveliness of truth,
But which have waned and vanished as a dream.
I muse in silence o'er my ruined fame,
With only Heaven conscious of my shame.

My feelings mere delusions oft you deem,
Dark, morbid fancies flitting o'er my mind,
And all incredulous of their power to bind;
But do not oft indulge so vain a dream.
There is a solitude I often woo,
Whence careless mortals seldom draw their thought;
A lonely country by the glad unsought,
Who love companionship in all they do.
This may explain my seeming cold reserve.
My visions come from deserts wild and rude,
Where seldom those who smile and talk intrude,
Having no circumstance their need to serve.
The grave may give you some conception true
Of that lone land for ever in my view.

It is a melancholy fact, that those
Who are favourites of Fortune abuse
Her gifts, (I know few exceptions,) and use
Them, as if to do with them what they chose
They had a right quite unquestionable.
It tells ill of our nature, that the heart
Is harden'd by what should soften it. Part
Clearly rises from unconscionable
Habits of self-indulgence. It is rare
To feel a want and not supply it: so
These selfish habits insensibly grow,
Till self becomes supreme. They hate the air
For being cold or hot, or wet or dry,
As if their humours were to rule the sky.

That use makes familiar is an adage

Old. It may be so, and in some things no

Doubt is ; but there are exceptions ; and two
I know which do not prove the rule. The edge
Of a razor is its only worth : so

Of clergymen, who talk religion much,

Their qualities, meekness, grace, are the touch-
Stones of their truth, and may be, belief too.

I know none, perhaps a few, who are not
Intolerant, like Pharisees of old,

Fond of loaves and fishes,—the fragments sold,
And who resemble Christians not a jot.
Then I ne'er heard of pain grown familiar,
For ev'ry fresh throb was dissimilar.

Byron says, "in life there is no present."

We live therefore in the past and future.

Like a shadow in the glass, the feature
Of our happiness, impressed a moment,
Then vanishing away. The past cannot
Be recalled,—the more to be lamented !

For in it thoughtlessly was cemented
The fabric of our joy, and not a jot
Of which, mine at least, but was laid in sand,
The reason why it totters to a fall.

The future is not—what it may be, all
Despair to know ; but they may understand
That the more illimitable it be,
The more scope, e'en now, for felicity.

Some men are very fond of rarities,
And make them more so, keeping them idle
In chests and drawers, doing nothing ; idols
Of a silly worship. The vanities
They breed flow naturally from a creed
Based on mere clay or brass, like, in olden
Time, the calf so impiously molten.
They but unconsciously betray their need,
Making their respect so material,
As if they had nothing but stocks and stones
To place it on ; and it will break no bones
To surmise, if aught more ethereal
Was in their mind, they would not make so much
Of trifles, but, like others, think them such.

My Mother ! more than Mother ! fifty years
Have passed since I, an infant, by thy side,
First felt thy tenderness ; and on the tide
Of time my feeble bark still onward steers
By thy direction, watchful still to save
It and its freight from wreck, children and wife,
My fame and fortunes on the voyage of life ;
But for thy aid, long ~~sunk~~ sunk beneath the wave.
Heaven only can compensate the deed ;
And when thy course shall be review'd above,
It will be found writ in the lines of love.
And Thou wilt have of praise that glorious meed,
“ She has loved much ”—which Jesus spake, to be
The crown of all the kind and bountiful, like Thee.

Thy cross, my Brother ! thou hast meekly borne ;
A high example to the strong and free !
Who seldom bear their burdens well, like Thee.
In comparison how light !—night nor morn
Affords thee frequent rest—from urgent pain !
Dependent too—deprived of motive power—
On others' aid—helpless from hour to hour !
Yet cheerful ! nor heard ever to complain !
Thy sports were once equestrian—or to roam
Wide o'er heath and moor and wood—thy delight !
Thy dog and gun companions ; and no slight
Fatigue, laden with spoils, went with Thee home.
Thy sports are ended ! but thy heart, still sound,
Plays with its youthful kindness around.

My earliest born ! thrice seven years have fled
Since first, thro' Thee, I bore a Father's name !
No time can e'er obliterate the claim !
Years ! of mix'd joy and sorrow—o'er the dead,
Thy Brothers ! victims of an early fate !
Impending still o'er us ; and when to fall,
We know not—inevitable to all !
May thy life be happy ! and thine estate
Thro' future years be prosperous, in good !
Blest be thy friendships ! mutual thy love !
Serene thy hope ! and firm thy faith above !
And when thy mind the world may have withstood,
My claims upon it need not task thy care,
If I have help'd to plant the virtue there.

My Son ! my only one ! since three lie low,
Once, like Thee now, companions of my love !
And oh ! may Heaven, in its mercy, prove
Propitious to thy life ! nor lower bow
My head, already thrice discrown'd ! When years,
Long years, have left their influence on Thee,
And the past has waned upon thy memory,
Yield me the passing tribute of some tears,
One grateful momentary glance of thought !
I would revive before thy mental view
The remember'd source of some emotions, true,
Holy and chaste, within thy bosom wrought.
Oh that my will had might ! thy fate should be
The highest in the scale of destiny !

My Lucy ! in thy wand'rings by the Rhine,
Its vineyards, meads, its woods and castled shore,
There still may linger, for thine ear in store,
The echo of a tone that once was mine.
For I have gazed upon its classic tide,
Pour'd my lone plaint along its heights and plains,
When none I loved could listen to my strains ;
Nor wife, nor playful children by my side.
Should it retain the semblance of my voice,
Deep love for thee and them it will disclose,
And soothe away thy momentary woes
Of absence ; making thy lone heart rejoice,
With bright suggestions of thy distant home,
Where eyes will brighten when you cease to roam.

There are angel influences o'er thee,
Isabelle ! spirits of the just look down
From Heav'n upon thy pilgrimage, to crown
Thy darkly pencill'd brow with sanctity.
Thy names, my child ! are each enroll'd on high,
For they who bore them in their day were known
For loveliness of nature, all their own.
Meekness, endurance, love, faith, piety !
Thy calm intelligence but seems to me
Their benediction ; and thy large blue eye,
With its placid gaze and brilliancy,
To beam from thoughts like theirs, all purity.
May thy life be thy childhood to its close,
Resembling theirs in all except its woes !

Sweet child ! when I recall thine infant state,
Ere many hours had witness'd to our joy—
Ineffably pure, and without alloy
From earth, thy beauty shone inviolate.
Of the mix'd elements of good and ill
Below, thine were all pure—like Heaven's light,
More beautiful to our enraptured sight,
With all the impress of the angel still,
Thy spirit's, feature's origin and source !
The early years of childhood have pass'd by,
And thou art still more lovely to our eye ;
Thy nature rising as it gains in force.
Thou art the living emblem of that child,
On whom, as the type of Heav'n, Jesus smiled.

There is a compensation, in the scheme
Of Providence, adapted to each woe
That falls, appointed, upon man below—
Some boon the stern affliction to redeem.
In thee, my Brother ! helpless as thou art— [grey—
Thy manhood's prime scarce past—thy ringlets
Feeble thy limbs—and thy wheel-chair thy stay,
It has been a light buoyancy of heart.
The seer fields of autumn were once thy haunt,
The wave thy pastime, and the gallant steed
And early exercise of morn, thy need ;
Yet now deprived of all, how small thy want !
How uncomplaining ! cheerful ! patient ! kind !
As if privation could not reach thy mind.

My venerable Friend ! how far beyond
The Psalmist's age hast thou held on thy course,
Invincible to years, which leave thy force
Of body vigorous still, and the fond
Remembrances of many who have left
Thee, clinging to thy heart, unchanged by time !
Four-score years and five ! thou wert in the prime
Of this eventful being ! Now bereft
Of her who made existence joy to thee,
Of him, the brother of her love and thine,
Thou art lonely, and no appeals of mine
Can draw thee from thy solitude, to be
My inmate, that I might watch o'er the stage
Declining of thy patriarchal age.

Calm hours of midnight ! silent, lone, profound,
 Friendly to meditation and the heart ;
 The day's delusive vanities apart ;
And a stern consciousness of truth around,
How have I quail'd beneath thy searching power !
 Yet loved thy influence ; seeking again
 Thy solitude, to nourish all my pain !
Is it that self-conviction, with its shower
Of tears, falling upon the heart, refines
 The source whence motives, actions, wishes flow ?
 That pride, unirritated, in the glow
Of mute, silent penitence, undermines
Its base, and falls a ruin before Heaven,
Rearing the hope assured of sins forgiven ?

Why should I marvel even those I love
 Find food for solace that I cannot find ?
 Who may control the impulse of the mind ?
Changeable, as the fleeting clouds above !
The moods of youth are not the same in age,
 Care does not weigh oppressive upon all ;
 If some can sport in lightness with the ball
Of circumstance, why—obey the adage,
“ Live and let live ”—and thus fulfil thy doom !
 I cannot envy levity of thought ;
 Nor find what I have long intently sought ;
And hence perhaps my oft imputed gloom.
They know me not ; tho' life's impressive claims
Might argue that my mind had nobler aims.

Our great Lexicographer's uncouth form
Was somewhat in accordance with his mind :
Ponderous and huge, vast. He had refined
Qualities not many ; and some deform
His memory. In politics, he was,
As conversation, a tyrant—bigot
In religion ; and of nature, a spigot
In a cask had discernment of its laws
Or beauties, as much as he. There were hours
In his moody life worthy of his fame :
His scorn of Chesterfield redeems his name
From all servility ; and when his powers
Recur to thought, they failing too through age,
The doubt about his pension stirs our rage.

I doubt whether folly has any coat,
More devious from the just proportions
Of good taste ; or which shows the distortions
Of its figure more, though many fools dote .
On it, than the habit of mockery :
I know not if I could most rave or weep
At this contemptible costume. I keep
My temper by some effort from very
Scorn when I see it. I loathe fantastic
Tricks of all kinds, and this too offensive,
Keeping oneself so on the defensive
Against a tendency of being sick.
For anything which stirs choler in us
Inevitably makes us bilious.

How much is there in the world we never
Hear or see, or by inference only,
Yet affecting others indirectly
In action towards us, through thoughts which sever
Ties once deem'd indissoluble ! I fear
This habit of indulging sentiments
Secretly, like some mixtures, oft ferments
Into acid qualities, as I hear
Such is the case in domestic life, when
Vinegar is so produced from sweets pent
Up in casks which have not a large vent-
Hole. I have seen such effects in some men
From this inward working, that I take care
To give my own thoughts plenty of fresh air.

To hold communion with the forest scene,
Amid its maze to seek each flow'ret wild ;
Roaming in age, as fond as when a child
Its sylvan wonders were delighted seen ;
To follow on where daily duty leads
Untired, turning devious oft to show
Compassion, where rewards alone that flow
From silent goodness can attend thy deeds ;
An approving conscience, the eye above,
And her fond smile, so faithful to her vow,
Watching thy homeward steps with anxious brow,
The yearnings of a heart grown old in love—
My friend ! these thy tastes ! thy boons ! they will be
Too thy recompense thro' eternity.

Why should opinion rule with tyrant sway
The free-born mind ? accountable alone
To Heaven ; with a charter all its own,
And laws immutable it must obey ;
With steady aim towards the purpose high
Of life—a few short years and insecure
In our existence, destined to endure
Unchanged by death, throughout eternity :
We need not fear the censure of the crowd,
Blind to the real interests of the soul ;
Nor, strong in faith, submit to the control
Of worldliness, with voice however loud.
Success can have no reference to state,
Our progress sure thro' every turn of fate.

There is a mood too frequent with some men,
Ruffling my mind in its more sensitive
Condition,—those moments in which I live
Tremulous easily, as the aspen,
Impressible to e'en the slightest breath
Of air, so gently blowing, you can see
It stir, but by the tremor of that tree,
Not a single leaf beside that moveth.
It is when, being serious, I meet
Jests responsive to the appeals I make.
Nor other disposition shown to take
Note of what touches me. Now though 't is sweet
To see a calm cheerfulness of spirit,
Levity can make no pretence to it.

Some may think my hues of thought are as light
And as variable as the shadows
O'er a landscape ; and that one scarcely knows
What to expect, so changeable the sight
Presented to the sense. Yet such is life !
A mixed web to all. To me it has proved
Such ; nor am I sure whether to be moved
By joy or sorrow, with either so rife
The circumstances around us. I know
But one relief in its vicissitudes,
Faith in Providence ; and this in all moods
I bring before me. It advances slow
At times, and I droop in the interval,
Only to rise triumphant from the fall.

I need no clergy, with their solemn face,
Their grave sententiousness of wordy thought,
To commend religion to me. I caught
Amid clouds its rainbow hues, as the trace
Of storms was fading fast away, and hope
Succeeded, led on by the heavenly view.
He must be poor in need indeed, who through
Life wanders far, and fancies he has scope
For expatiating in any trust
But that the Gospels teach. I value them
So highly, that, like her who touch'd the hem
Of the garment, I feel a virtue thrust,
By no earthly power, into my faint soul, [whole.
Through their touching precepts, which make me

There is this difference between the things
Of heaven and earth ; and I wish those, so fond
Foolishly of this world, would but despond
The more, that they might, goaded by the stings
Of conscience without remission, cure them-
Selves effectually of their idle
Love of vanity and show ; and bridle
Their envy so far, as to endure gem
And pearl on others without coveting
The baubles. There are things, unseen by eye,
Worth more their admiration—heavenly.
While earthly ones, though seen, are curveting
So about, they are soon lost view of quite,
At least by death, which brings the first to sight.

We live in a cloudy clime ; and thick fogs,
And rain, and, in London, coal-smoke and soot,
Encompass us about, with cold to boot,
And darkness oft at noon ; and nothing jogs
Us on pleasantly in these cheerless days.
Yet not far above our heads is sunshine ;
Wasting its beauty on the desert line
Of clouds between us and its cheerful rays.
As we cannot bodily mount upwards,
We must accustom ourselves to the mind's
Balloon, and get into the light and winds
Of purer odour. Tho' the eye towards
Beauty oft is vainly strain'd, that slight car
Will float us to it, be it e'er so far.

I do not affect to be conversant
With all doctrine, but miracles I quite
Comprehend ; as tangible to my sight
And touch, as was Luther, the protestant,
Or to Melanethon, or the Pope's legate,
Who gladly intangible would have made
To any sense the old reformer. Laid
Up safely where, without the least debate
About my rights to them, I oft visit,
Are those evidences of a great truth ;
And though I stumbled often in my youth
O'er an obstacle, and could not miss it,
I grew in stature, and obtain'd the prize,
Than fine gold far more precious to my eyes.

There is no defect in institutions,
In the prevailing tone of thought, feeling,
Observances, rites, which should be healing
In their effects, not mere substitutions
Of quack remedies for known specifics,
I so much deplore, as the want of hold
Religion, thro' our churches, clergy, cold,
Formal, oft spiteful, and least pacific,
Has upon the soul, mind, heart, affections
Of the young and even old. When one thinks
How aged the world is, it really sinks
The spirits to see the sad defections
From its faith : and the fault it seems to me
Consists, in making it a mystery.

The chapter fourth of John, in which our Lord
Reveal'd himself to her, who could not see
To the depth of his meaning, seems to me
Of all most precious in the sacred word.
For there, in terms so legible, we read
What worship should be, confined to no place,
Preferr'd in spirit and in truth. The race
Of Samaritans and Jews still have seed
Within our churches, and Gerizim may
Be found, and more than one temple, as sites
For prayer, in these days of obsolete rites.
I construe the injunction, as to say
That all place and time should be set apart,
And our best worship—purity of heart.

I am fond of reading, and my taste lies
In several wide directions; at will
Rambling alone o'er valley, mountain, hill,
Ocean or shore of the humanities.
When I have pick'd up all the flowers or weeds
That were strewn along my path, I gather
Others from a new one, and would rather
Have the wild ones than any rear'd from seeds.
There are productions, human but in part,
Like White on Selbourne, so full of nature!
Or Darwin's Journal, of the same feature,
That claim my admiration quite. My heart
Is made better by these works. Travels, Lives,
Science, the Scriptures—show, too, where it thrives.

There is no gracefulness of demeanour

Like that which piety, habitual,

Unobtrusive gives : all its ritual

Imprinted on the mind, and the tenour

Of observance instinct to the heart : no

Pause in worship, ev'ry act a tribute

Of obedience—thought an attribute

Of love. Other consistency I know

Not, of character or duty ; and this

So beautiful, that it shames all outward

Loveliness. I have mark'd, in the regard

Of others, so patient in their service,

Some, unnoted by the world, who to me

Proved, servitude alone was liberty.

I love the cricket's chirp ! Amid the noise

And tumult of a city life, it brings

Recollections back upon me of things

Long past, ere care, and age with its alloys,

Had blended with the golden hues of youth.

How well do I recall its cheerful cry,

On winter nights, when storms deform'd the sky,

And on the hearth the faggot blazed, and truth

From aged lips, all silent now ! was heard,

And stories of the olden time ; while those

I loved, and long have mourn'd, thro' wind and snows

Advent'rous came to join the festive board !

How changed since then the world and life to me !

Those joys survive alone in memory.

I can see no chance in the circumstane
Of life : and when at times it palls upon
Me, from hope deferr'd, some fair promise gone
Which in its rise seem'd to give assurance
Of felicity, this renews my strength,
To meet adversity with composure,
Equal to win or lose ; as I feel sure
That each, appointed, prospers me at length.
The good I seek might often prove my ill,
And mercifully is then denied. Who,
Conscious of his nothingness, can review
The power, order o'er him, and put his will
In opposition to its law ? I place
Mine to Him submissive who fills all space.

The time has quite gone by with me for tricks
About religion. There are shades and shapes
That elude my mind's eye, which never apes
Another's—Protestants or Catholics,
Affecting to see in things what is not
There : and yet it sees the invisible,
A certainty never divisible
By it into doubt : and I pay no scot
Now-a-days but where it is clearly due.
I wish I could, in more sense than one, pay
All I owe, but 'mid my defaults, I may
Do my best : and if others should pursue
Me to east me in the prison of their
Hate, I will find contentment even there

There is a strange conceit from which I am
Not free ; that of telling news, whether good
Or bad : that it may be well understood
I am mix'd up with their importance, sham
Or real. I see others as great fools
As myself ; for it is worse than folly
To suppose an event I heard wholly
By accident, and over which the tools
Of my handicraft had not been at work
To carve it out of the misshapen block
Of circumstance, could add aught to the stock
Of my merit ; and then the more than Turk-
Like cruelty, to rush on composure,
To prove its hold of joy was not so sure !

Some see a difference in the reading
Of a text in Matthew, and I incline
To the express'd opinion of Wetstein,
“Blessed in spirit are the poor.” Feeding
My thirst from that fountain of sweet waters,
The Scriptures, I muse often on the ways
Of men, so eager to obtain the stays
Of fortune, to prop their weakness. Haters
Of poverty, they rush on temptation,
To fall victims to its snare ; while the poor,
“Rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom,” soar
Above their low estate ; tribulation
Clothing them with meekness, loving kindness,
Mercy, beyond which all pride is blindness.

To me the Scriptures are above all price,
Serving my necessities, so urgent !
No parts soothe me more than those detergent
Of care, a malady that took its rise
In my system intellectual, ere
I was aware of all consequences.
If men could only know the sequences
Of things, they would be more cautious, and fear
The influences of habit. 'Tis too
Late for me to avert my own evil,
Or exorcise that remorseless devil
Within at work over my sins. I woo
Hope from its highest source, and would advise
All, who are blind, to make use of my eyes.

I do not like those who make so much fuss
About their own salvation, as if, it
Secured beyond all doubt, they had just hit
The mark, and had much leisure to discuss
Despairingly the success of others.
I would humbly hope, having so much fear
As to keep watchful, lest temptations here
Should lurk to betray. But for my brothers,
Fellow-pilgrims on the rough road of life !
As I would gladly share my crust with them
Having an empty wallet, so the gem
To be worn hereafter, if it cause strife
Between us, which shall win it ? I release
My hopes to them, so that we keep at peace.

There are some truths which startle us at first
But to make us pause. That matter, prolate,
Palpable to sense, has no separate
Existence, independent, gives us thirst,
Not easily allay'd by beverage
Of any kind ; until the mind sets free
Her streams of thought to slake it. Then we see,
Like the well of water, in the adage
Of the olden time, springing up to life
Eternal, an ocean, to satisfy
Our wants for ever ; and we may defy
All future need. We cannot, in scenes, rife
Under all forms, with agency divine
Constantly sustaining them, oft repine.

To use power wantonly becomes not man,
In whom it is a delegated trust.
The abuse of it but excites disgust.
Humanity, like Uncle Toby's, can
Redeem many faults ; and when the good old
Soldier set free the gnat to roam at will,
In that simple act he did more than skill
Can do. If I remember, Back has told
An incident more affecting, because
Mercy in it had reach'd the savage heart.
When the heroic Franklin's name made part
Of the Indian conference, in a pause
The warrior recall'd him, as the chief
Who would not kill, but gave the fly relief.

If any one gets mystified at church
Or chapel by a sermon, redolent
Of things past his comprehension, and sent
At him wrathfully, being in the lurch,
And not knowing how to get out of it,
I would advise him to consult St. James,
Whose general epistle, while it shames
Many who deal so freely with Tophet,
As if they were of it, will clear his mind,
If there be common sense there ; or his heart
Be penetrable to religion's dart,
Wing'd from an apostle's bow. I can find
Among the commentators no such aid
To my soul—put forth, too, without parade.

I know no incident equal in power
Over my feelings to that of the blind
Wayfarer, who had his sight, thro' the kind
Compassion of our Lord, restored. Slower
Beats my pulse, so often elevated
Above the due medium by the fair
But fleeting hopes excited by the air
Of worldly prospects. I feel elated
To a firmer trust, when I contemplate
The benignity of this gracious act
Of mercy ; and if I shrink at the fact
Of the poor sufferer's meekness, sedate
In faith, I find strength in the blest promise
So exquisitely open'd to our eyes.

Let any one compare the parable
Of the prodigal son with the preaching
Of most modern teachers, and the reaching
After new light from them seems a fable.
Language has done its utmost to reveal
Beauty of thought, sentiment and feeling
In that blest narrative ; and, appealing
To us from the source of love, we may feel
Assured that our duty is pictured there.
There are the clear but high requisites, shown
By the poor outcast,—penitence alone,
And going to our Father with his prayer.
What modern Pharisee can e'er prevail
Against the beauty of this simple tale ?

In religion, as in law, the letter
Feebly expresses what the spirit means.
Hence, in reading Scripture, one seldom gleans
A full harvest from it, unless better
Interpretations than the mere verbal
Be resorted to, to aid its seeming.
When I muse o'er the Parables, gleaming
Upon me come such bursts of light, and all
Sweet influences, that I see far more
Than any human eye has e'er beheld :
Felt, and conceivable alone, and held
Secure, by those, who thus learn to explore
Those mines of truth, by that clear inward light,
Which brings their gorgeous beauty full to sight.

Some may say or think that I am o'er fond
Of religion : but what beside exists
In this fleeting world ? Is there, who subsists
On food and knowledge, a man so in bond
To ignorance, as not to know it holds
Within its grasp all that is ? Though some see
It not, there is a spirit o'er the sea
And earth, diffusing beauty, which unfolds
Itself to the inward eye, not in hues
Of light, reflected from the flower, tho' these
Suggestive, but brighter rays : and the bee's
Downy wing wafts him, laden, o'er the dews
Of morn, less swiftly to his honey'd cell,
Than these the thought to Heaven, there to dwell.

I hate all modern saints—not those sinners
In the calendar, so oddly placed there,
For long since their follies have been laid bare
To themselves : and, unlike the beginners
In the cant of sanctity—they have seen
And repented of their ways. True is it
However, swoll'n, as by an ague-fit,
Is my spleen, at the most fantastic mien
Of the purists, old and young, of these days,
Who cannot stomach aught but prayers and psalms,
And prying into all corners, the qualms
They suffer from what they seek, miss, and say
They suspect, justify the solution,
That their minds are not free from pollution.

In reading I like to follow the bent
Of inclination, and could never be
Amenable to rules, but must feel free
To deepen any impress of thought, sent
Previously by what it may be which
Regulates the mind. The hardest task is
To digest history, with its taxes,
Wars and treaties. I suffer from a stitch
In the most sensitive part of my brain,
Whenever I take up Charles the Fifth by
Robertson ; and what he means by glory
Ascribed to Charles I never could explain.
I can see—feel it in the simplest flower,
Not in the insolence of abused power.

I render all due homage to Luther,
Especially for his heroic zeal.
He benefited mankind a good deal
By his rights of private judgement. Lutter-
worth, however, some ages long before,
And darker, brought forth a noble spirit
In old Wickliffe, to whom I think merit
Adequate has not been render'd. The more
I think of him and his clear perception
Of duty, 'but the more his greatness grows.
The fine old post-obit martyr well shows
By his Bible what a just conception
He had of it.—The stake, Rome's parliament
Had not, in his day, used as argument.

There are some o'er sensitive believers
Who read Gibbon with profound aversion,
And hate his ridicule, as the version
Destined, like the code of the Repealers
The Union, to supersede at last
The authentic. We may almost expect
The one as other. Wrath cannot effect
The ruin of our Isle, anchored so fast
And for ever in our love: nor grave wit,
Nor caustic irony, hope to prevail
Against the truth. It is of no avail
To argue that the barbed arrows hit
Church- and priest-craft merely, but it is so
To my mind, and fail'd to lay e'en them low.

There is companionship in the deep wood,
By the lone shore, where foaming surges roll,
On Alpine heights, or on the verdant knoll,
Or flowery mead, musing in pensive mood;
For Nature there responds to every want.
But in society I feel alone
Often, or quite strange, nor know I the tone
Of my own voice; and this familiar haunt
Of others seems a wilderness to me
Without bloom—whether its fault, or only
My misfortune, puzzles me in lonely
Hours, when one reviews the things that we see
Pass before us; and though prone to censure
Myself, on this point I am not so sure.

To meet an old friend after long absence,
One who was the companion of early
Years, our school-fellow, and to trace, dearly
Loved, the same features, though changed by the dense
Atmosphere of this world, which wears iron
Into rust, is one of those incidents
Which compensates for half the accidents
Of life. It rolls back the tide of time on
Which we had been floating; and the eddy
Backward takes our bark to those still waters,
Where it was first launch'd, in our own father-
Land; and we see faces ever ready
With their smiles to bless us, and hear accents
So familiar, as to deceive the sense.

The death of friends comes o'er us with a soft
Emotion, when we feel it is but meet
That they should part; all in our power, tho' sweet
To them in their last hour, alas! too oft
Incapable to save; worn out with woe,
Disease and feebleness. But when we hear
Of one we had loved and served, in the fear
E'en of our unworthiness to do so,
Yet doing our best to bless,—snatch'd from us
Suddenly, after long separation,
Perhaps all estranged by defamation
Of our name; we can but trust the promise
Of the secrets of all hearts being known
Hereafter, before an impartial throne.

I very often smile at my conceits,
Well pleased that others do not perceive them.
Much has been written on the mind, that gem
Worth worlds : and for which in fact all the feats
We see around us were alone design'd.
But metaphysicians want the substance
Of analysis, through the reluctance
We all feel to tell—the truth. Hence they find
Their science, like physic, empirical
In details : but why they do not tell it
To serve their own needs, I guess not. Helot
As I am to pride, the satirical
Observations I should hear, if I told
My secrets, deter me from being bold.

Lucy ! thy loveliness, like that of truth,
Can never fade. It has not of decay
The elements. There will soon pass away
In thee, as all, the comeliness of youth,
The lustre of the eye, and beauty's bloom,
The smoothness of thy cheek, and that bright glance
Of gladness, when visions of sweet hope dance
Before thy view. These, my child ! must make room
For the gracefulness of age. But thy soft
Compassion, guileless innocence of heart,
Thy love, so soothing to me ! placed apart
'Mid other blessings, I have known,—too oft
For my unworthiness ! these can know no
Change, save, like the amaranth bud, to blow.

Our affections never seem so precious
To us, as when absent from those we love.
We are then thrown upon ourselves, to prove
Philosophy how vain ! and how specious
The poor pretension to independence,
Assumed in the interval from all care,
When we speculate at home with an air
Of gaiety, throwing a wanton glance
O'er the sweet sufficiency of our hope,
So blest in its fulfilment ! on freedom
From control, as if any other doom
Would equally content us. I but grope
In darkness when the eyes which smile on me
Habitually there, I fail to see.

There is too much anxiety in some
Characters, striving to do difficult
Things, nor e'er satisfied with the result.
We cannot by its excess aid the sum
Of our boons, but rather decrease them all.
I fret, as others do, at what I like
Not ; but my follies, as time flows on, strike
Me more and more ; for in the interval
Between our blessings evil will appear
In some shape. If it leave the essential
Of our hope harmless, trifles are sent all
To teach us fortitude, that we may bear
Stern trials ; for it is our duty
To see e'en in them a moral beauty.

The murmur of the surge on a still night,
As it breaks on some unfrequented shore,
Or where no discord mixes with its roar,
Is sweet to one, a stranger to its might ;
Whose ear has listen'd to no other sound
Than the city's turmoil, perhaps for years.
I have known, quite unsolicited, tears
To dim the eyes of one who has thus found
Himself so hymn'd by nature's harmony.
I am no expounder of mysteries,
Nor e'er puzzle myself o'er the ties
Which bind to our souls that which cannot die,
Deal with it as we will, the instinct clear
To respond to her voice, where'er we hear.

I know nothing pleasanter, in a storm
On shore, within sight of the raging sea,
The foaming surge blending its melody
With the pelting rain—thro' the haze the form
Of some fearful bark seen, with the reefed sail,
Contending with the wind, than, thus debarr'd
From the accustom'd stroll, our pleasures marr'd
By the dread of wrestling with the rude gale,
To have our circle, round the winter fire,
Cheer'd by a guest of liberal feeling,
One in love with science, and revealing
That repose of character, which higher
Minds display so gracefully, and to see
How such men triumph o'er prosperity.

I am fond of the silent sympathy
Of mere presence ; pursuing the tenour
Of my thought alone ; with the mute favour
Conferr'd on me of the society
Of one I love, on whom my eye may rest,
Whene'er I feel the want of something more
Than occupation conjures from its store
For my necessities. To see, well-dress'd,
My wife, for instance, calm from composure,
Her glance wandering at times in search of mine,
As if she brought up ore from the same mine,
Planning her work beside me, not demure,
But smiling o'er her fancies, induces
A feeling which nothing else produces.

What a shock does the quick intelligence
Of death produce in us, in our freedom
From impending ill, spared awhile the doom
Some friend has found ! With what a startled sense
Of insecurity to those we love
It comes ! We gaze upon our little group,
Asking the heart, so easily the dupe
Of hope, as if its treasures were to prove
From their very purity safe from harm,
Which of the objects of its affection
Can be spared, old or young, and the question
Meets no reply. We feel our bosom warm
With quickening love, so prepared to live,
That, parted, we have nothing to forgive.

My Friend ! blest is the instinct I discern
In thee, impelling to the search of truth
Thy mind, still fresh with all the force of youth.
Heaven has given thee genius ! and to learn
Her mysteries, that thou mayst acquit thee
Of the debt of gratitude for the gift,
By adding to her beneficence swift
Thoughts of praise for the wonders thou wilt see
In all her works abroad, is thy duty,
As of all. Go, humbly, on thy toilsome
Way ; and if, in thy labours, I may some
Moments share thy zeal, tracing the beauty
With thee of the glories that await thy
Finding, I ask no greater boon from high.

I feel low at times, and it is beyond
My reach to explain the reason ; for when
Out of sorts, causes are, as we know, then
Much sought after, and most of us are fond
Of the belief they come a great way off,
From some chance circumstance to which we have
Been exposed, as is the case in all grave
Disorders, such as catarrhs, where the cough
Is attributed to an atmosphere
Insalubrious. But in the moral
Maladies which so oft affect us all,
The infection, I am inclined to fear,
Rises from wastes within, which breed an air
More fatal than marshes are known to bear.

It makes one smile to see the eagerness
With which some persons follow up the scent
Of e'en a slight suspicion, as if meant
As an instinct merely, like the hounds, less
For the savage thirst of blood than the love
Of game, hunting out the truth, well always
To know, as with the brute, 't is in his ways
To catch the hare, or what else it may prove
That he pursues. You will ever find these
Sportsmen or women most attracted by
Bad odours, I suppose because they lie
Better, directing the pursuit with ease;
So fond of carrion, as ravens are
Or crows, they nose at once corrupted air.

Of all qualities, unfortunately
The rarest in this specious world, so full
Of falsehood and deception, which the dull
In discernment so inordinately
Mistake for truth, there is none to compare
With integrity of soul: that native
Disposition teaching one so to live
As to adapt himself everywhere
And at all times to the exigencies
Of an enlighten'd self-respect. You are
At once at ease with these men, there's an air
About them so guileless! Their tendencies
You can calculate on, tho' far apart,
They stand so in awe of their head and heart.

The "bad dreams" of Hamlet come o'er us all,
As his did, e'en from the visions flitting
Past the waking thought. Tho' little fitting
A Prince's state, or any one as tall
In stature, to be "bounded in a nut-
Shell," there was deep truth when he of Denmark,
"Th' observed of all observers," made remark
He could be King of infinite space, shut
Up so close, but for mere dreams. We may not
Charm them all away, tainting the very
Source whence sweet repose unto the weary
Spirit comes; nor, tho' arm'd, escape the shot
Of circumstance, tho' wounds e'er heal the best
In all those habitually at rest.

The character of Iago revives
At times, playing his subtle part again
With dupes like Roderigo, and to gain
Ends as selfish, using, not to kill, knives
Sharper than swords, which cut the victim's soul
In twain, as that arch demon did the Moor's.
'Tis quite sorrowful to observe the lures
These crafty knaves employ, sinking the whole
Nature to the level of our pity,
Whate'er its former cast might be of good.
To see how cunning wins its way is food
For some idle thought. The simplicity
Misled by it would excite compassion,
If it were free from all taint of fashion.

People may say what they choose about some
Things ; but there are others of which the less
Said the better : for the temper, unless
Unusual, is apt to be quarrelsome.
It is curious how sensitive calm
Dispositions are when their vanity
Is touch'd ; for though it be insanity
To say so, I know none without this harm
Of character. I have seen those who dream'd
Not at all of this weakness inherent
In them, explode, bringing down consequent
Ruin on all around ; and it has seem'd
To me that the feeling, kept too close, will,
When it gives way, emulate the devil.

I know no essay writ for our behoof
On seeming, so deceptive to the sense,
That not a path lies open but a fence
Is needed, to keep those who pass aloof
From danger, lurking close beneath their feet.
I am so fond of rural scenes I stray
With my thought free, indifferent which way
I turn ; and tho' perhaps a slough may greet
Me, where I doubted not the ground was good,
I pluck the flower blooming there, content
To win the prize I sought, in its sweet scent
Or hue rewarded for my pains. No food,
Healing like this, I find where men betray,
Mere dirt which soils me thence I bear away.

I am very sensible there are some,—
The devil, who delights in mischief,
Alone knows why—to whom it gives relief
To feel antipathies, making their sum
Of hatred square, or round, or some other
Figure equal in outline, having no
Break in it. There's a consistency so
Evident in this, that e'en a mother
In her love cannot exceed it, complete
As her blest feeling is. I get along
With these honest natures, who are all wrong,
Far better than with those who try to cheat
Themselves or me with mere cold pretences,
For one's time 's not wasted o'er defences.

They make sad mistakes who keep not their minds
Of a fine polish, to reflect the light,
As some large telescopes, to aid our sight
Of heaven, do. It is too true, one finds
Events, which, like the air on them, are sure
To leave a blemish o'er the ore refined
Of the mirror of our thought, all design'd
To show by contrast that which should allure
Us to preserve its purity, making
Its clearness quite essential, as our health
Is, when disease has robb'd us of that wealth
Of body, and we have been ill, shaking
With an ague fit. There is a physic
For the soul in pure thought, quite specific.

Of all the chance incidents which befall
Us in our pilgrimage through this weary
Life, there is none on my mind so cheery
In its influence, tho' I think that all
Are capable of being turn'd to good,
As meeting, when I least expected it,
A man of intellect, one who is fit
To be enshrined and will be so. My blood
Has a quicker flow as I gaze on him,
And his voice sounds sweeter far than music
To my ear. The moments pass'd with him, sick
As I am of the world and all its dim
Shadowy promises, quite realize
To my soul all its rich capacities.

There's much misery in some mischances :
As when it happens that, feeling I know
Not how, or grave or dull, so that I'm slow
To comprehend,—for this much enhances
Any difficulty I am labouring
Under, the cause no doubt of my being
So inapt,—a fellow joins me, seeing
A joke in every thing, endeavouring
To make me share his ribald mirth, when smiles
Are about as easy to me as sight
Is to the blind. I try with all my might
To look sensible, wishing him some miles
Off; and what with his folly and my spleen,
I feel torture, piteous to be seen.

Nothing so profitable as prudence,
That calm perception of the safe and sure,
Incurring no risks, the least exposure
To which argues such a sad want of sense
In most opinions. It is a pity
This quality is apt to be debased
By some others, not, as jewels are, placed
In fine gold, but set in a filagree
Work of base metal, an abuse of taste ;
For there is no reason why a virtue
So rare should not have ornaments as true
In kind to show it off, nor left to waste
Its lustre all alone ; but the fact is,
A counterfeit is put off in practice.

The views of life in different persons
Vary about as much as their features
Do in expression ; and men seem creatures
Of natures so opposite, that the sons
And daughters of poor Adam must have known
In their increment downwards strange mixtures
Of races, some intolerant. Strictures
On opinions are but fair in those prone
To maintain their own as best, as most do.
Happily the stake is used for fences
Now-a-days, but the church for defences
Makes use of words which inflame the untrue
Believers' minds ; and because they are quite
Wrong, education shall not set them right.

The story of the good Samaritan
Was design'd to teach mankind a lesson
Of true charity, in more ways than one.
If our modern Levites fancy they can
Vindicate themselves by the example
Of their Jewish brother, who, in some haste
No doubt, turn'd aside that he might not waste
His time over a sinner,—a sample
Of a faith still prevalent in the church,
As the poor Catholic finds to his cost,
They should remember what religion most
Insists on. I fear some are in a lurch
They little dream of; and that parable
Might save them, if anything is able.

When I hear the winds of autumn sighing
Round me, and see the earth strew'd o'er with leaves,
The cold damp ground shorn of bloom, it grieves
Me, tho' I well know these forms are dying
That new ones may, as fair, revive again,
And that there is no other hope for all
Save in death; still there is much to appal
One in the sad change, and I feel pain,
Which nor the remembrance of what has been
Nor is to be can soothe away. There is
Around a void so palpable, which this
Solemn season brings, that altho' I lean
On faith, owning its power to save, I seem
Oft to muse, as if it were all a dream.

I stand in awe of those whose expression
Varies not, when the passing incident
Sways lighter minds ; as if their reserve meant,
Not indifference, but the confession
Of some cherish'd feeling, perchance of grief,
From the remembrance of a love buried,
Tho' undying—too rapt to be hurried
O'er the surface, by which some find relief :
With one fix'd thought before their mental view,
O'er which in silence and alone they pour,
From an unfathomable depth, the ore
Refined of a heart sensitive and true,
Whose smiles are all internal, meeting there
Responses which no living forms may share.

There are men, do what they will,—for they do
All things so gracefully from a modest
Sense of merit, which others cannot rest
Without feeling strongly, suggested so
Continually by their air and tone,
Throwing such refinement o'er their talent,
Grave or gay,—who give by far more content,
Confer more honour, thro' attentions shown,
Than princes can bestow. Those observant,
Knowing how time subdues all to a just
Level, as water in its descent must
Rest at last, wonder not when age has lent
To some its calmness ; but when youth displays
It, I know nothing sooner wins our praise.

A wise economy is a most rare
Virtue, as others are, showing a just
Sense of obligation to the high trust
Committed to us in our daily fare
And all other blessings. It is the source,
Not of more for ourselves, but the fresh spring
Whence charity flows freely forth to bring
Relief to those who need, softening the force
Of circumstance, whose chain is apt to gall.
But that call'd political is unwise
In this, that it seems but to blind the eyes
Of its professors and their hearts to all
But saving, a most cold philosophy,
From which as yet, thank God! the world is free.

Whenever I am prone to make a boast
Of any thing, not openly ever,
But getting at conclusions which sever
Me, as I suppose silently, from most
Men, I am soon cured, mixing with the world ;
Where, if one meets with fools who by contrast
Are apt at times to fill us with a vast
Conceit, by some flaw of wind we get hurl'd,
Like a ship, ashore ; at least I do so,
By those characters, who thro' a reserve
Richer than most confessions, tho' they serve
Us now and then with a remark or two,
Make me doubt my depth, whate'er my sounding-
Line may show, to feel secure of foundering.

I scarcely know the thing I do not need,
That is, suitable ones, for of useless
My brain is giddy at the sight, and unless
I can dispose of part, my fate indeed
Will be to quit these premises or life,
As I have scarce room to move for lumber,
And my sores from bruises without number
May one day or other breed such a strife
Within that I fear mortification
Must ensue, and death, a pretty quittance
For my pains in furnishing! By what chance
I made such a medley in a station
That required no great show to set it
Off, modestly at least, puzzles my wit.

I oft wish 't were possible to seal up
The mind at will, so that to enter there, [fare
The world's strange discords should, like the poor,
But ill, attempting, as they do, to sup
On what does not belong to them, under
Lock and key and bolts and bars quite secure
From pillage. I feel it hard to endure
Robberies, which when I most need, sunder
Me from the food on which my health depends.
To give I'm prone from my poor stock of fare,
Leaving a pittance for my use, nor care
I what demands are made, since nothing sends
A quicker glow o'er me than to find those
Who suffer willing I should share their woes.

I never get into society
But I gain something useful for the mind
Or heart, altho' as usual I find
The good mix'd up with a variety
Of ill, like shadows which set off the light.
I perceive there the insignificance
Of man, as he shows in those scenes of chance-
Medley, a truth which never comes to sight
So clearly as when made applicable
To others as myself; not that I feel
The balance fairly poised, as if the steel
Had its just weights, for some more suitable
To sink the beam are to be sought elsewhere
Than in crowds, when I meet genius there.

Hamlet marvell'd what Hecuba could be
To the poor player, that she should call tears
From the source whence they flow: and how much
The brain is there in the world! quite as free [sears
From being kin to us, no such relief
As weeping, to cool the fever on us,
Issuing. I think clearly the onus
Proving it, before we give way to grief,
Should be thrown on those who so oft molest
Us; that some claims should at first be made out
Ere we are drain'd of blood so in the rout
Of circumstance; and yet there's no rest
Out of the battle-field, when the loud din
Is heard by us of those at strife within.

It is quite useless to disguise some things,
For they will peep out in spite of effort
To conceal them. It never was my forte
To be good at hiding, which I think brings
More exposure than my threadbare coat
Implies. I wear it always when 't is cold
To keep me warm, and meeting others bold
Enough to scan it closely as they float
By in shining broad-cloth, I feel I have
Old associations on my back,
Better than any new ones, which they lack.
Then my worn garment shows I'm not the slave
Of fashion; my taste therefore, tho' it seem
Poor in some respects, richer than they deem.

It often puzzles me to discover
Whence the melancholy which comes o'er me
Has its source; not like clouds in a stormy
Sky rising, but when streams of light over
All the moral landscape round seem diffused:
And, if I do not feel their warmth stealing
Thro' me, the radiance has a healing
Charm to keep out the cold to which I'm used.
But like all charms it vanishes away,
Leaving me dark at noon, and the midnight
Comes so unconsciously upon my sight
That I note it not, nor the waning day:
Tho' my vision has a clearness in it
Which makes palpable e'en things of spirit.

It is so with joy, mysterious gleams
Of which burst on me, when the accidents
Of life have crippled me, and no events
Wear a prosperous air, and suffering seems
A doom inevitable, submissive
Too my spirit to its fate. As we see
Clouds, long impending, on a sudden flee,
Leaving the sky serene, from some missive
So ordaining, there comes as prompt a change
Over my soul, as if it could not bear
Longer the mists of circumstance, nor wear
The dull pall of care, but be free to range
In its own pure light, and pursue its way
Alone, where darkness ne'er obscures the day.

These strange vicissitudes occur so oft,
That I have learn'd to mistrust appearance,
Shielding myself against the chance
Influences of events, harsh or soft,
As I feel a power within which sways me
To its will: if often pensive, clothing
My spirit with mourning weeds, and moving
Me to saddest thought, again, like the glee
Of birds, and with wing as buoyant, bearing
My soul above the world, where I hear strains
More sweet than music on the summer plains
Of earth, where all is gladness, and wearing
Beauty as a bridal garb. My lamp I
Keep trimm'd, not knowing when the voice is nigh.

There are some obligations due to me
Which are never paid, and I'm too modest
To demand requital. As I molest
Society, where some delight to be,
But seldom, I know few who resort there,
Nor do I wish to know ; for I prefer
My own thoughts, not that I deem them better,
But they are all my own ; and then I care
Not for the small talk which I used to hear
In younger days when I was ambitious
To be seen, for it made me seditious
At times ; so I note the world without fear,
Reading of it, and when the great I meet,
I worship as they pass me in the street.

This sort of worship is a favourite
Of mine, making no demand of church fees
On my purse. As I saunter at my ease,
Of a sudden there comes before my sight
A man who knows me not, like Elphinstone
For instance, and tho' he, all unconscious
Of his greatness, nor the least ambitious
Of its note by any one so unknown,
Passes, in the attitude of thought,
As I have seen him oft, one arm resting on
His back, his figure slightly bent, upon
His brow peace, as if his whole life had brought
That wealth unto his soul, I think of him
In the East, and sometimes my eyes grow dim.

Such is the influence of true greatness !
It is what some call a red letter day
With me whene'er I meet it, and I pay
The tribute of my love, for my weakness
Gets a touch of strength by the mere aspect
Of the moral and intellectual
Union, of which rare existence all
I have is the tendency to respect
Its being. "I become of that around
A portion," and as I tread "the flat, stale,
Unprofitable" places of the vale
Of earth, the mountain has a sight and sound
Of vastness in which I share ; so virtue,
Even seeing it, thus affects me too.

I love e'en the haunts where virtue has been,
Or where it lies in the weedy church-yard,
In "the long-drawn aisle," where perhaps the hard
Cold stone tells no tale of who rests within,
Tho' reverence had brought me far to pay
There the homage of my uncover'd head,
To feel in future time in the dull tread
Of earth I had stood where genius lay,
Seeking out its resting-place that I might
Meditate as I do when I approach
Living worth, anxious to wipe all reproach
From off my soul, existing in the sight
But of its excellence, the thought of which,
Tho' it may have pass'd away, makes me rich.

I know nothing much more affecting me
 Than a visit paid to graves, and I have
 Thro' life oft turn'd aside to them to pave
 With their recollections my memory ; [by,
 Soothed with the thought, that while the crowd pass'd
 My visitation, humble as it might
 Be, would prove death had not destroy'd their right
 To the respect of those whose wandering eye
 Glanced o'er the past, recognising the true
 In it, the wise, the chaste, the good,
 Whose works while on earth are our daily food,
 And who survive spiritually too
 To bless us.—Yet I know 'twas all in vain
 To think so, as if the dead could complain.

“But why should sober reason cast away [so.
 A thought which soothes the soul?” White inquires
 “*Movemur enim, nescio quo pacto,*
Locis ipsis quibus vestigia
Eorum quos diligimus adsunt,
Studioseque etiam sepulchra
 Contemplor,” Cicero was heard to say ;
 And I envy no one, whose heart, so blunt,
 Gazing upon a spot consecrated
 By the ashes of the illustrious
 Dead, engenders not feelings made lustrous
 By the holy place so dedicated
 To repose, where I read a homily
 Most useful to me with a tearful eye.

In the walks of life, as thro' the mazes
Of a wood where stately trees are growing
As it chances differently, owing
To the space around, some it amazes
Not to see luxuriant in their form,
Having freedom to expand in the light
Of heaven on the outskirts of the bright
Forest radiant with beams, where the storm
Howls amid the branches nurtured to bear
The shock, while others all about hemm'd in
Are shorn of their proportions, tall and thin
Or puny in their size,—so men there are
With virtues as unequal, the purest
In development seen where crowds are least.

That bubble reputation ! how it floats
Before us ! deck'd with hues as bright as those
I have seen children sporting with at close
Of a summer's day, and its rainbow coats
Wear out as soon, bursting with the least breath
Of air, and vanishing away with all
That so attracted us in the vain ball,
Made up of emptiness, void as the wreath
Of mist o'er a landscape, tho' that softens
Outline, like a veil spread o'er it, thro' which
You see beauty amplified, made more rich
By what in part conceals it, and often
Clothing with it common forms ; but for fame,
How few it graces leaving them the same !

I am not satisfied that what some call
Pride be what they have any right to blame.
But be it as they choose, to me the same :
For I feel at my time of life of all
Follies none so profitless as to aim
At mere opinion. I am far too poor
To stoop so low. While I see men immure
Themselves in dungeons, in which they lay claim
Preposterously to light, pride will keep
Me from them ; and, like Othello, “ man but
A rush ” against me, and I at once shut
Out approach, retiring where I may steep
Myself in oblivion, for I hold life
So cheaply that it is not worth the strife.

I am fond of pride ; in our poverty
Of many things it is comfortable
To have a power, unlike one's friends, able
To serve us at all times, with liberty
To feel independent without the least
Alloy. God help us if we were not proud !
I should be clamorous, pleading aloud
For justice, be like of prey a wild beast
Roaring for food, while now I keep my den,
And let the jackals roam in search of it,
Making the wastes of life hideous, fit
For them, prowling round, as I see some men
Do, reminding me of the fable in
Books of the poor ass in the lion's skin.

If by pride some would impute vanity
To me, they're fools, knowing not the meaning
Of words or qualities. I've been weaning
Myself from that childish insanity
Too long, and have more faith in physie
Than to believe now-a-days any taint
Infectious yet remains to be complaint
Against me. I acknowledge I am sick
Of many maladies ; but I have health
Enough to know, of all that I behold
Around me, of that which books have told
Me of the thoughts and deeds of man, my wealth
Is borrow'd ; all which exists within me
I have reap'd but from others' husbandry.

Of what has any one reason to be
Vain ? born in these later generations,
Where he learns what has been in the nations
Pass'd away,—the wise, good, great, true and free !
Of whom our knowledge is but the harvest
Gather'd from their toil. True, we have our share
Of labour to accomplish, and be there
Honour where 't is due ; but can any rest,
With view so limited, when the prospect
Lies o'er all space, seeing himself alone
In the illimitable scene thus shown
For our instruction, when our high respect
Is due to Him, whose object to impart
Himself freely is to refine the heart ?

Yet I am fond of idol worship,
Tho' no Catholic. There are saints to me
Shrined in my heart's core, and I bend the knee
In silent homage, nor care for bishop
Frowning on my zeal. And there have been hearts
Too, now at rest ! I've honour'd, loved, revered
So fondly, that whenever I have near'd
The altar of our faith, as it imparts
Its holy influence, I have sometimes
Thought their benediction rested on me,
So suggestive of Heaven the harmony
They once diffused around ; and to the climes
Above, where they have found repose, my soul
Oft aspires, as if it would spurn control.

What is worship but to the beautiful
And true homage render'd ? and how much there
Has been and is of both in the world ! where
We need incitements ever to the full
Discharge of duty, wand'ring from the way
In search of phantoms, which we worship too.
Wealth ! fame ! ambition ! power ! all untrue
In seeming, while the pure in heart display
Such loveliness, that, tho' our orison
Can have in truth but one direction, one
Only object, I at least, from my own
Obscurity within a horizon
Bounded by mists, instinctively revere
All who have made my pathway lighter here.

What a majesty of beauty, firmness,
Devotion, love, trust, charity, and peace,
Lies centred in the soul ! My pulse must cease
To beat, worn out with pain, which, resistless,
Makes life to me a martyrdom, a scene
Of thralldom, my better faculties chain'd
Down by habits evil, my hope restrain'd
By doubts self-implanted, but what has been
To be, and nothing worth, ere I lose sight
Of those, whose glory, clothed in meekness, truth,
Endurance, piety and faith, my youth
And age have known, living and dead, gives might
To me to encounter danger, by their
Triumphs encouraging me still to bear.

I hate cant, and could we strip religion,
As profess'd by many, of its slimy
Coat, we should see scales beneath, as by me
And others those of snakes in the grass, on
Their bellies winding slyly, are sometimes
Seen. I feel for those poor reptiles, as I
Do for all creatures God has made, pity
When they are kill'd wantonly, and it chimes
Not with my creed to cherish grudge because
The Devil once usurp'd the form, he had
No right to take, of Serpent in that sad
Hour when he tempted Eve. It makes me pause
When I hear sins denounced in canting strain,
Lest he should be at his old tricks again.

'T is refreshing in the concerns of life
To have to do with honest men, who look
Directly at an object, and ne'er brook
Cunning or trick, which kindle in them strife
Not easily allay'd. When business
Is in hand, since duties are incessant,
Each moment with its special mission meant
For despatch, and delay makes our sum less
Gainful of profit in a moral sense or
Physical, 't is wearing to the rightful
Mind to meet a fellow whose head is full
Of cobwebs, dusty traps, like those on door
Or shutters rarely open'd, stale jobs, which
Spiders, like these men, weave to make them rich.

I have not much ground to boast of any-
Thing, yet, humble as I am in the eyes
Of others—that is, not as I surmise
I am in my own for reasons many
Really so—but insignificant,
A nobody, and with no soul either,
For such the poor estimate they prefer
Of their fellow-beings whose means are scant—
Some few circumstances occur to me
As them I'm proud of. I know a man, who
Occasionally works with me too,
So transparent in his texture! I see
Thro' him, a vision as pure as the rose-
Bud affords, or violet when it blows.

He has power and yet is merciful ;
Talent but modest ; a name, yet as if
He were unknown, not consequential, stiff,
As we see some men are ; his bosom full
Of tenderness—his integrity quite
Proverbial : speak of him, and the first
Thoughts suggested are his honesty, thirst
For truth, simplicity, and for the right
In all things ; as liberal as the air
In principle, a Whig of the true school ;
Like Hampden tyranny could never rule
O'er him, yet loyal as all true hearts are.
Care I'm sure knows him not, save that which love
Implies, or obligations due above.

Such men profit me much more than money
Does, and I see a few of the same kin
With whom I'm on speaking terms, or nod in
Passing. If I were social as honey-
Bees are, loving to congregate in swarms,
I should try to tempt them to my hive, or
At least hunt with them, choosing the same flower.
But nature some animals with alarms
Has fill'd, the harmless ones, and so they keep
Aloof, as if they had no right to be
Where others are, and 'tis the same with me.
I love from my nook retired to peep
At what is passing, but I feel unfit
To wrestle with the world, so shrink from it.

A sight which never wearies me except
When I hear discord raging among men,
Or mark oppression forging chains, and then
I shut out sound and light, of both bereft.
My necessities, 't is true, compel me
To encounter both as I roam for food,
And if sympathies will do any good,
Or such poor services as it may be
In my power to render, I am content
Enough ; for tho' I shun men I love them,
Since of all ornaments I know of no gem
So precious as the feeling, that one bent
Low by misfortune has been by me raised
Up, or saved perhaps from being crazed.

For such is the effect of hard fortune
Now and then, clouding the mind as the sky
Is with vapours, and you observe the eye
Downcast while there's calm around, till too soon
The scene is changed, when the tempest having
Gather'd force breaks loose, and desolation
Comes awakening fear, such as a nation
In a revolt knows, reason quite lost and raving
Madness in its room, a state piteous
To see. I wish men in prosperity
Would nerve themselves to meet adversity,
That it might not appear so hideous
When it o'ertakes them, for captivity
After all is but loss of liberty.

How few know of freedom, when they have it,
The uses ! abusing it as they do
Most other gifts ; and tho' hard to say so,
I think its loss awhile would benefit
Some I know, teaching them what blessings are
By their absence, as we learn some things here,
The worth of friends, for instance, ne'er so dear
As when dead, and we feel in our despair
Disconsolate, to think that we never
Shall see them more, our love inadequate,
Too poor for their desert,—a feeling late
Unfortunately, which ere ties sever
Should be thought of ; for I believe love
Generally is not what it might prove.

That word *never* has a startling meaning
When applied to meeting friends who have gone
Where all must go, and tho' it has a tone
Of truth in one sense is false in seeming.
For all truth is merciful, since we know
God is so, the source of all, and His will,
Inscrutable as it appears, is still
Righteous, and 'mid its just decrees below,
Tho' we see death ordain'd, to all a doom
Inevitable, nor to lift its veil
Permitted to us, yet our hopes prevail
Beyond it, and in our faith there is room
For trust that we shall see again those who [too.
Die ; and, thank Heaven ! the mind's eye sees them

As the blind see beauty, or they would not
Be cheerful as they are, shut out from light,
Darker than the pole on a winter night,
But for the ray within which soothes their lot,
I know no reproach occurring to us
So intelligible as that implied
By this cheerfulness of theirs, when 't is tried
By our discontent who see, in a fuss
About trifles, when all nature, shut out
To them, we explore, wand'ring far and wide,
Gazing o'er hill and plain, and by our side
Those we love, in whom, as they roam about
With us, we see reflected from glances
Of the eye that which our joy enhances.

The fact is, habit leads us oft astray,
A master ruling sternly as despots
Do o'er slaves, and I know nothing which blots
Beauty more than its being in the way
Always, which one would think should but enhance
Its charms, from our leisure to peruse them.
But you will find, like those who wear a gem,
Familiarity by some mischance
Takes off its lustre, so things more precious
Fade away by use, just as the air does
Or the leaf; even bread, which soothes the woes
Of hunger in the poor when the luscious
Morsel they can earn, which is not certain,
Palls on the taste of those who know not pain.

The affluent prefer dainties, liking
Things more sapid, cook'd up with nicety,
Living to eat, fond of variety
In dishes, which produce a striking
Change in them by time caused by repletion.
They get unwieldy in their proportions,
Sluggish, and you may observe distortions
In their limbs from gout; or else depletion,
To bring them low when apoplexy seems
Impending, weakens their tone, and you see
Them dropsical, when tapping sets them free
Awhile, and their breath more easy redeems
Their hope of life, soon to sink for ever
Into the grave, loathsome as a leper.

This is no scandal, tho' it should be so,
At least of mine, and the worst of all turns
Out that this grease thus got by feeding burns
As candles do, tempting moths to their woe;
For we hear of these human tuns of oil
Consuming daily till their wick goes out
In smoke, and there are fools so put about
For occupation, that they, tho' it spoil
Them, play round the flame, to fall in at last.
It's a pity men so mistake the use
Of the senses, not given for abuse.
Heaven is bountiful, and the earth past
Compute productive, and the law is clear
Of moderation, if mankind would hear.

But I am becoming sentimental
As I'm apt to do when I look upon
The follies round, and I must change my tone
Or bid it cease. In the regimental
Corps of human life in the ranks I stand
A common soldier, with his fare and pay.
Thus much, and all that I in truth can say,
I hint for those, idlers perhaps, whose hand
Unused to better occupation may
Pick up these triflings with a vacant hour.
I have found men curious, fond of power,
Prone to spell out riddles, as children play
At them. If they that of my name would have,
It may be found ere long upon my grave.

How complacently we talk quite at ease
Of death, casting a philosophical
Sort of glance on our own grave, to be, all
Know, somewhere, but where or when our release
From life may happen fortunately
We see not ! I have wish'd mine many times
Dug anywhere in earth, so that the chimes
Of the bells of this world all so stately
From high towers ringing, sounding sweetly
To ears, would not jar on mine as they do
On those who mourn when their sad note is slow.
That dull repetition ! telling meetly
That dust to dust returns, a memento
Unregarded as thro' the streets men go.

For these peals in some moods but seem to mock
Me, saying the world is glad, when I am
Otherwise, as I feel too well, nor sham
My trouble, for it is a kind of shock
To me when I hear of others joying,
And not an element of peace within
I know, coming upon me as a sin,
Tho' I feel guiltless of all annoying.
I mention this merely as an instance
Of my odd sort of state at times from some
Cause hard to find out; and in fact the sum
Of my disturbances either from chance
Or my folly is so great, that I have
Said truly I've oft coveted the grave.

Not that it has any great attractions
In itself, tho' one looks upon it as
A release from woe; but to me it has
Other claims than hiding from distractions;
For I'm not so sure in my calmer hours
It implies rest but to the pure in heart
Alone, who seek it not nor wish to part.
But I feel as if there would be powers
For us to leave buried in it evil
Habits, and tho' beyond to suffer what
Is just be our doom, we should there find that
Clear light to guide us safe from future ill,
Pursuing the true without obstacle,
Which to do here we have ne'er been able:

At least I have not, and all my own fault,
Because I went wrong, tho' I was early
Taught the right in all things, and not merely
By precept but example. As a vault
Where darkness is and dampness, so I made
The world to me, leaving the sunny rays
Of Heaven, and those shining in the ways
My Father trod. I know not why I staid
There or went into it, but this I know,
When I emerged to light I could not see
Clearly, being dazzled, and about me
Were the cold damps of earth which made me low,
And I've never quite recover'd from them
Yet, my life wanting health, that precious gem!

I have been sickly all my days, and wear
The consequences in my head and heart,
In my whole soul in fact, for the great art
Of living prosperously is to bear
A sound mind, which, if I ever had one,
I lost thro' disease brought on myself
When I was young ; so as upon a shelf
We put by things useless, they being done
For, crack'd and good-for-nothing but to lie
There, I have been thro' life idle, poorly,
Familiar with pain, which makes me purely
Miserable at times, except that I
Feel sympathy with those who suffer it,
Which has been to me a great benefit ;—

Almost the only one I have ever

Known, because they could not rob me of it ;

While other boons, as if I were unfit

For them, are stolen from me or sever

Of themselves : and the world does as creatures

Who are wild beasts do, whenever they see

Another lamed, so that he cannot flee,

They set upon him, one of the features

By which wolves are distinguish'd ; and lameness

In men is not always of the body,

For many have it in the heart, and die

Of it or effects, which is a sameness

In result, as you may see in sinners

Whom men help to kill over their dinners ;

Holding them up as a sad example

While they eat, putting them without the pale

Of society, so that all men rail

At them as bad goods, a sort of sample

Not current in the market, and no one

Bids for them, and the poor fellows, sorry

For their fault as all are, feel the worry

Of shame which eats into them till they're gone :

None to pity them except the very

Few who like me know how easy it is

To err, from mine and perhaps their remiss

Behaviour. My pride's not of that cherry

Hue which some would have theirs to be, but wan,

With frequent blushes when myself I scan.

I care not who knows it since I have known
It long myself, the worst kind of knowledge,
The only true in fact, having an edge
Sharper than steel which cuts us to the bone—
I am too fond of life,—much as I wish
To lay it down at times and be at rest,
A state I never meet with in my quest
Of happiness,—to take off the relish
It has by the fear that others will find
Me out. I detest all trick, and I do
Not want the love of men if I must woo
It by deceit. There is nothing my mind
Holds in scorn more sternly than some men's ways,
Putting forth pretences to attract praise.

What I aim at and seldom win
Is my own respect, coming before me
As the lightning does, flashing, which I see
A moment, vanishing as soon, and in
Darkness leaving me ; so my better deeds
Gleam now and then when I'm lone from the screen
Of clouds they lay behind, and they are seen
So faintly, that their pale light nor misleads
Me nor serves any better purpose than
To show the dark outline in which they lie,
Encompassing them about, so that I
Have no cause for pride ; and if any man
Has, let it comfort him, quite enough for
Me to see how miserable my store.

I had my head full once, and the heart too,
But both are empty now, and long have been,
Of such folly, a sort of mushroom-screen
To ignorance. When I began to woo
Knowledge it waned away, leaving all bared
That untamed waste of barrenness and weeds
Which I have long been clearing, sowing seeds,
As men do wild lands, settling on them, scared
At first by the wilderness all around,
Until by toil it smiles upon their view,
As kind Heaven sends them increase thro' its dew,
And rain and air and light, making the ground
A storehouse of its bounty, which they reap
In joy and thankfulness, and so oft weep.

I have, as the poor settler, the same cause
For pride, no more, that 'neath the vault of Heaven
There is room for me to work my leaven
As for him, to eat and be fill'd. I pause
Beyond, as I feel that way lies the thought
Adequate of the boons bestow'd on all
By Providence; and until the moral
Obligation sits lightly, as it ought,
On the mind, as debts do, paid, swaying thence
The soul, making the life obedient
To the will, itself pure, what can be meant
By complacency in the sight of Him whence
All good comes? entrusted to us powers
To be put to use for His ends, not ours.

I am weary of myself, and oft wish
Of souls the transmutation were a hope ;
For I would change my being for a scope
Wider than my own, to have a relish
Like that of birds with wings, that I might fly
Away, and find as they do other climes,
Making life a summer joy : and at times,
As the sweet lark does, I should climb the sky,
Innocent as he is with his blest note ;
For he could not sing so blithely, nor rise
So high above the earth that our eyes
Discern him not, tho' his songs of praise float
Audible to us on the air, unless
He were pure, which is the sole happiness.

I do fly at times on the wings of faith
And hope, but they tire soon, for the damp dews
Of earth settle on them, and then to use
Them is impossible. Tho' Cowper saith
It is the same with birds, it is not true,
Tho' weariness may be ; but they never
Have their light feathers, as mine are ever,
Damp'd by the dews of eve or morn, as you
May learn in that treatise, so beautiful !
By Wells, who first made known to our surprise
Their philosophy. 'T is clear to my eyes
That my coldness is the reason why full
On me they fall, so that when most I need
To mount I find that I cannot succeed.

Indeed I do not know what is success,
And I doubt if others are much wiser.
Tho' old I feel always, as a Sizer
Does at college, in a station low, less
Than I need, tho' if his poverty be
The reason, as mine is, why he looks up
To those above him, who in places sup
Where he may not hope to be, let him see
No reproach in it, but make rich his mind,
Which in the end will place him far higher
Than seats at table ; for he may thus aspire
To honours accessible to refined
Duty ; while my poor circumstances teach
Me what I aim at is above my reach.

I do not believe here that any one
Has attain'd it, tho' placed before the eyes
Of men of all generations the prize
Of peacefulness ; not that concord which shone
Upon us like a sun at noon from Chinese
Climes of late, making the universal
Heart of this majestic world jovial
To think men, no longer shedding seas
Of blood, were friends—that one great family
Of earth, countless as the sands on ocean's
Shore, long exclusive, lone, felt emotions,
Thro' fear perhaps, at last of sympathy
With others, of mutual trust ; and hope
Already points to blessings without scope.

If men had won it there would be wars no
More, not e'en of passion in the human
Breast. When we look round us upon the plan
Of nature thoughtfully, which we all know
Was sketch'd for man, matured, is still maintain'd,
So full of order, design and beauty !
So impressive ! palpable ! our duty,
As its sole interpreters, to be sustain'd
Consistently, is a conformity
To it, to the will of Him who made it.
And whose life exhibits this in a fit
Obedience, an uniformity
Of purpose ? and failing, who but must feel
Contrition ? which he cannot all conceal.

Oh virtue ! thou good supreme ! why art thou
So inaccessible, above the reach
Of all ? like those eternal snows which bleach
In the sun's light upon the alpine brow
Of mountains, where human foot has never
Trod. Why dost thou haunt the soul ? a spirit,
Revealing beauty, which we inherit
In our dreams alone, phantoms that sever
From us when we wake ; nor can we conjure
Them in the palace of the soul to stay,
Thy true abode, if we but knew the way
To make it so. Oh ! that we could ensure
Thy permanency, and repel reproach
Of conscience, which alone bars thy approach !



HOME
AND ITS DUTIES.

L. A. B.

THESE THOUGHTS ON HOME

AND ITS DUTIES,

SUGGESTED BY THE

FOLLOWING PASSAGE FROM ONE OF HER LETTERS,

“ MR. W.’S PLACE IS LOVELY: NO VIEW BEYOND HOME, BUT
THE HOME VIEW IS AS FINE AS YOU COULD WISH,”

ARE

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.



HOME AND ITS DUTIES.

THRO' all the mazes of this lovely world,
Its verdant lawns, its deep umbrageous woods,
The eye, observant of the moral scene,
Can ne'er extend beyond the view of Home.

The cherish'd haunt of childhood's happy hours,
To which the wearied foot of age returns,
After long travel o'er earth's farthest bounds,
To gaze once more upon the hallow'd spot
Where first a mother's tender care was known,
And where her grave imparts a sacredness,
That springs from recollections of her love,
So pure ! so constant ! 'mid all the errors
Of our youthful way ; and where the kindred
Race of brothers, sisters, friends sprang to meet

With us the joys, the sorrows, and the toils
Of life, before its solemn purposes
Had dawn'd upon the mind ;—this native spot,
Is not our home ! but where the sober voice
Of duty calls ; where honour can be won,
By humble resignation to the will
Of God, bearing our cross, nor, o'er the rugged way,
Fainting beneath the load his discipline
Enjoins in love and wisdom infinite !

The Christian's home is in the mind, the heart,
In thoughts, affections, dispositions, hopes
That reach beyond the bounds of space and time.
There is no enduring home but only
These ; and all earth's varied scenes of beauty
Are but means appointed to a moral
End, revealing thro' their soft loveliness
The Source supreme of beauty, who imparts
Himself to all who seek Him thro' his works ;
So lavishly display'd ! to show his power,
To inspire trust, to whisper hope, amid
The frail and changing circumstance of life.

How exquisite every hue of Nature !
Her forms diversified, emanations
Of the mind creative. Not a flower blooms,
But its delicate contrivance was first
Devised by Him who made the soul of man
After his own image ; and still maintains
The subtle life erst impress'd on matter,
All chaotic, void, until he breathed it

Into being, gave it lustre, and bade
It draw its nurture from the earth and dews,
Exhaling perfume odorous, to give
The air its healthy and refreshing charm.

What magic skill display'd on all around !
What fair investment of the formless earth,
As the "spring comes forth her work of gladness
To contrive," clothing the scatter'd ruins
Of a former year with fresh loveliness,
Teaching, by a blest analogy, frail
Man a lesson, annually retold,
To point his mental eye beyond the grave,
That cheerless winter of his waning year !
To which succeeds a spring that knows no change.

There is on every page of Nature's work
A moral, and so eloquently urged !
Would man but read it, as he journeys on
His pilgrimage, from infancy to age ;
Design'd to cheer him on his toilsome way,
So rugged else thro' cares that e'er molest
His peace, yet each ordain'd, not casual,
To teach him virtue, not to be acquired
In easy dalliance with the sports of life.

How illustrative of his fleeting years
The waning seasons ! and between his state
And natural phænomena, what fine
Analogies ! which the mind discerns not,
In its thoughtless glance ; tho' a moral power

May oft be found to throw a radiance
Round him, in the dark profound of error,
When the world entices him with shadows,
That flit as he pursues, leaving him lost,
From idly chasing unsubstantial joys.

'T is wise to let imagination spread
Her wings, and bear the free, unfetter'd mind
Along the shadowy paths where fancy
Serves the cause of truth, in her wayward flights
Skimming the doubtful confines that exist
Between her faëry world and reason's realm.

Who, startled, but must pause to meditate
The change miraculous that from a worm
Gro'ling and sensuous, after seeming
Death, wrapt in cerements that befit the tomb,
Evolves the light and spiritual fly,
Which, on downy wing upborne, sports in air,
With glory crown'd, sipping the nectar'd sweet
Of flowers, meet companions to a spirit
Enfranchised thus from earth's material bonds !

I prize these kind suggestions of a Power,
Who, in the wonders he has made, has thus
Instill'd lessons of profoundest wisdom
For the mind of man, poor, helpless pilgrim !
In the hourly need of aid and comfort,
From a Father's love, on which dependent
At every step of a deceitful life—
Virtue the aim of all below the skies.

Nor can aught that we behold have other
Purpose than to prompt purity of thought
And high resolve, raising the conscious mind
To contemplate the attributes of God,
Which stand reveal'd in all that He has made.
We cannot gaze, nor far nor near, where He
Is not ; a privilege alone conferr'd
On man to retrace the works of nature
To their Source, expressive all of greatness.
To complete the plan of mercy, His Son
By special inspiration taught his love.
Each mode but parts of a consistent whole,
The blest instructions to an earthly race,
Lost to all hope without such high regard.

It cannot be that there exists in truth
A sceptic to that Messenger of Heav'n,
Whose accents wake an echo in the heart
Before the mind can reason of the cause.
What ! can vain man, the creature of an hour,
Who comes he knows not whence, nor whither borne,
As his frail breath exhales away in sighs,
While he is planning schemes of prosp'rous
Days, that dawn on a forgotten grave—
Dare he lift up so high presumptuous
Thought, as to question the Almighty plan ;
Opposing it with a doubt, when nothing
Certain but his utter nothingness is known
Amid his boasted knowledge, empty else
Of aught that bears the name of wisdom here ?

Do miracles dismay ? Where can we turn

To hide them from our view, among the things
Best known and most familiar to the eye?
Does e'en the simplest change we note admit
Of explanation, other than effect
Without a cause, except the Cause of all?
What logical connection can we trace
Between the oak and acorn; or between
The verdant leaf and earthly nutriment?
The one essential to the other's growth;
But how we know not, nor e'er hope to know.
Do things familiar merit less the name
Of miracle than those of rarer birth,
When observation leaves us in the dark
As to all reasoning on the gradual change
Of material elements quickening
Into life?

There 's not a being so lost
To hope, whate'er his speculative thoughts
On creeds, but his affections prompt his faith
To a life beyond the grave. Is there not
A miracle e'en in the nascent hope
That life again can issue out of death?
May human reason e'er explain the mode
By which a sentient being can be raised
From dust; and mind, which vanishes away,
Can spring, unchanged, triumphant from the tomb?
Yet this the sceptic clings to in his need,
Referring all to an Almighty power.
Why, for a moral purpose, kindly plann'd,
May not He who made us, display on earth
The power, it is admitted, that He will

Exert hereafter in the life to come ?
Does not life itself suggest a constant
Miracle ? and shall we, inheritors
Of it, presume to limit the designs
Of Him who gave it, as if one only
Mode exists in which it can be display'd ?

I marvel not at miracle, but cling
With fervent faith and fond belief to all.
But one there is which mingles with my thought,
Nor comes in any questionable
Shape, but so attractive ! so persuasive
In appeal ! that in every mood I muse
Upon its charms, accordant all to me
With those I trace display'd in Nature's haunts,
Where all is harmony, and peace, and power.
That miracle, the character of Christ.
What gentle wisdom issues from his lips !
What soft compassion breathes in every tone !
What fervent piety in every prayer !
What steadfast faith, to reassure his mind
Amid the storms which beat upon his head,
Exposed to every exigence of woe !
Tho' tempted, pure ; forgiving, tho' reviled ;
Where most he trusted doom'd to be betray'd ;
He died the victim of a bigot hate,
Imploring mercy on his ruthless foes ;
Leaving his legacy of peace and love
To all succeeding ages of mankind,
And his example as our guide to Heaven.

Nor other can there be ; nor need :
The final revelation has been made,

The rugged paths have been made smooth, and faith
To be companion of our onward way.

It was his incessant exhortation
To those who saw his works, and doubted oft ;
Listen'd to his voice, and mistook its tone ;
Gazed upon him, and yet knew him never !

Dare we then be presumptuous in our faith,
That last accomplishment of noblest minds ?
“ Lord ! I believe, help thou my unbelief,”
Should be the prayer of all, not saints in Heaven.
Faint glimpses of it visit us at times :
Then soars the cloudless mind above the world,
Enabling it to move the mountains vast
Of care which oppress or overwhelm the soul ;
The mystery of life is clearly solved ;
We walk in gladness, and evil is not ;
The telescope of truth is ours, by which
We penetrate the infinite of space,
And gaze around the illimitable
Orb of life, the present, past, and future,
Sensible, as it were, to e'en our sight.
Who can stumble whom His right hand sustains ?
Or doubt when He is present to assure ?

Yet there are those who, over-confident
In themselves, look not beyond the narrow
Range of casual circumstance, and dream
That they can make provision for their wants,
Needing no aid from any higher source.
In their blindfold play of life, one event
In turn succeeds another, as trifling

As are the incidents in childish sports.
They are satisfied while the game goes on
Successfully, minist'ring to their pride,
Or, losing, they declaim against their fate :
No higher thought than self, from either chance,
Suggested ever thro' a wayward life,
Pass'd in ignoble indolence and ease.
'T is one routine of vapid form and show,
"Flat, stale, unprofitable." They are these
Who never truly live : spurn'd by the wise,
Their aim alone to gratify the sense ;
To toil for place and precedence ; to deck
Themselves in fine array ; and catch the gaze
Of envy, pining at their proud estate.

Alas ! can the soul be fed on incense
Other than that it renders up to God,
In deep humility for all its sins,
The worst, the greatest far, forgetfulness
Of all his goodness to a thing so mean,
For mercies shown as countless as the stars ?
There's no array befits a child of Heaven,
Save that which must e'en plume angelic wings,
Humility,—the only garb for all created
Beings, e'en for hope, to which we highest
May aspire. But let us not profess it,
To deny it in our lives ; affecting
Lowliness, while usurping high respect,
From self-conceit in our own consequence,
Because we boast such accidents of life
As wealth, or state, from birth, or other chance.

We all have powers to be put to use ;
Many have had ten talents for their share,
But not for selfish purpose or display.
The poor but only one ; appointments all
Wise and predetermined of a Father's love.
His righteous judgement will take due account
Of that entrusted to our care, and faith
In e'en the smallest pittance will outweigh
All shows and seeming of a thoughtless world.
That world's respects how hollow, false and vain !
And those most captivated by its lures,
Who fill the largest space in its esteem,
May shrink before the merits of the poor.

They, doom'd to toil, obscurity and want,
Own their dependence on a higher Power
Than aught within ; they sum up their blessings.
Their faith, hopes, affections, mutual love,
More dear to them than princely potentates,
And commit themselves to Heaven ; their prayer
For daily bread is utter'd from the heart,
Feeling, with grace, 't is all they dare to seek.
Nor more they need, nor all. Satiety
Makes that humble need unfelt to many.
The means of life, too easily acquired,
Or of that which makes it pleasurable [ful
To use, beguiles the mind from thoughts most health-
To the soul ; the feeling imminent of our dependence
Upon the providential care of God.
In spirit, truly blessed are the poor !
For they are humble. Life to them is rich

In discipline ; they are chasten'd by it.
No idle dreams of self-assurance blend
With the stern realities of their toilsome
Lot. They earn their scanty meal by labour,
Grateful for the boon ; toil is all they ask,
Its wages all their hope, to feed, and clothe
Them from inclement skies ; content with this.
Health oft rewards them with its ruddiest glow ;
Repose to them is luxury ; and sleep
Invigorates their hardy frames anew
To toil afresh,—their sole inheritance.
They have no soft ministerings to pride.
The world regards them not ; and, far apart
From its observance, they pursue their way,
Unnoticed and unknown. They covet not
Its honours, all prescribed ; and hence they seek
With Heaven communion, referring all
Their claims and wants to its compassion,
Sympathy and love : they have their reward.

'T is false to say the poor are coarse and rude.
Their simple manners and their homely speech
Are far removed from coarseness ; want may goad
Them to desperation ; and vice creep in,
While reckless of their sway, the savage host
Of passions may invade, and thro' the world's
Neglect, convert to ruin the once well-
Proportion'd mind, crush'd by the weight of woe.

I note the record of the righteous poor
In the blest book of life, and mark the fame

Impress'd upon their deeds by Him who lowly
Was, and meek of heart ; and often ponder
On the influences which poverty
Exerts in aid of virtue. He ever
Sought his bright examples from the humble
And the contrite spirit. The Prodigal
Was one,—the pious Magdalen ; the blind
Wayfarer ; the Widow with her mite ; and he who
Bow'd his head upon his breast, and proffer'd
His brief, simple, but most expressive prayer.
These teach me a deep lesson : each in turn
Is eloquent in meaning ; all accord
In that sole gem, humility ; the sense,
The feeling deep and urgent of something
Needful, which the world can neither give nor
Take away : dependence on the mercy
And the grace of God ; self-oblivion,
Self-sacrifice ; merging all in earnest
Prayer for aid and strength conferr'd from Heaven.

The Prodigal ! oh, what a theme for thought !
That poor, lost outcast ! from the dust pick'd up
A pearl inestimable ; and around
His brow circles a more than regal crown.
He united infinite extremes. From
Lowest degradation rising highest
In the moral scale ; ascending beyond
Angel's flight : giving more joy in heaven,
Thro' repentance, than e'en just men can give.
He was penitent ; and has taught us thus
How we yet may hope to save the guilty,

How faith can glorify the abject soul.
Lessons of deep import to erring man !
In penitence he should be example
To us all : in self-humiliation !
We, like him, should rise, go to our Father,
And say, " Father ! I have sinn'd, and no more
Am worthy to be call'd thy son." Those blest
Accents ! oh, how they ring upon the heart !
Assaulting pride, the last stronghold of guilt,
We melt in tears, heal'd, soften'd, and subdued !

We read, it is difficult for the rich
To enter in at the gate of heaven.
Whom call we rich ? Not surely those alone
Who in a worldly sense are so esteem'd,
But all who do not feel their poverty
Of power to sustain the load of life,
Unaided from above. The beautiful
Are rich, the wise, the high in fame,
Those who have friends to minister at need,
And satisfy the wants which indigence
Implies. The centurion was not poor :
He had the commendation of our Lord,
The most assured passport into heaven.
The pious Cheverus* had a princely
State and revenue. Since apostolic
Days, who has walk'd more humbly in the paths
That lead to immortality than he ?
Wealth oft inspires self-confidence and pride ;
'T is a temptation, lurking to betray.

* Cardinal Cheverus, Archbishop of Bourdeaux.

A mean for righteous use, not indulgence
As vanity or appetite may crave.
Like all other gifts, riches are talents
To be put to service, not of ourselves,
But Him who has committed them in trust.
They are not essential, else imparted
Freely. Too oft they lie as hidden snares
To the unwary ; and are coveted
With over-restless and intemperate zeal.

There often is of wealth a consequence
To be deplored in those possessing it ;
A want of sympathy with indigence
And woe : not from insensibility,
But ignorance what real suffering means.
A wise compassion softens and expands
The heart, refines and elevates the mind,
Quickens our best affections, and unfolds
The germs of latent tenderness, dormant
For want of nutriment to spring within
The garden of the soul, choked up with weeds,
Or left to barrenness and waste. There are
Inflctions common to us all ; hardships,
Privations trying to the mind, from which
The happiest are not free, nor can be
Ever. They are ordain'd visitations
Of calamity, to convince mankind
How transitory are the boons of life !
To lead us to a more enduring world.
We must meet them meekly, bowing the head
Submissive to the hand which chastens us ;

Grateful still for mercies shown, and clinging
With renovated zeal to faith and trust.
We may not hope to shelter those we love
From fate ; but there are sorrows we can soothe ;
Pains which admit of ease ; cravings we can
Satisfy ; bright'ning the wan cheek with smiles,
The heart with gladness, and the mind with hope.

We lose a precious privilege, failing
To minister to those who sink beneath
Misfortune, and who are lost to peace, shut
Out from all the joyances of life, left
Wandering in a darkness palpable,
Without a clue to guide them back to light.

“ What can he know who has never suffer'd ? ”
Was the inquiry of a thoughtful mind.
Is ignorance a consequence of ease ?
Do the facilities which await on
Affluence check development of mind,
Impeding virtue, while they minister
To sense and pamper pride ? Life was design'd
To be a scene of moral happiness
To all ; not the abode of misery,
Darken'd by guilt and weariness and woe.
It was not meant to satisfy the soul,
To fill our measure of contentment up,
To realize the waking dreams of hope,
To afford sufficiency to still
The restless craving of an immortal
Want. We should not fail to appropriate

Its advantages thro' our supineness,
Suffering our affections to run to waste
On perishable things ; when there are hearts
That need them, pining in loneliness, whose
Capacities, from the want of freedom
To expand, are lost to others, on whom
They might pour joy inappreciable,
From all the might and majesty of love.

I know by sad experience the clouds
Which darken o'er the mind, amid the storms
Of fate that beat on the unshelter'd head,
And feel for those on whom the tempest lowers.
There are sensibilities, which neither
Time nor hardships wear away ; but render'd
The more acute by each successive blow.
And not the calm, undoubting faith in all
The truth religion opens on the soul
Can temper the wind to the shorn spirit,
Sensitive to every blast, and doubtful
Of its claims to any happier fate.

The barbed arrows of adversity,
With which the atmosphere of life is rife,
Piercing the heart with their resistless force,
Which, bleeding, still must struggle on, thro' keen
Wounds and anguish, to sustain existence,
Tho' each throb gives capacity to pain,
Would not be felt so sharply if the pangs
We suffer were but individual,
Exhausting all their desolating power

Directly upon the hapless victim
They assail ; for he knows little truly
Worth the knowing, who feels not how blessed
Are all the uses of adversity,
Making us plod the sands of life, barren
And waste, till they are made to yield us flowers,
Water'd by tears—their only nutriment.

But who may meet discouragement to hope,
In all the ardour of its fond pursuit,
Without “decline upon his brow,” musing
In abstract mood, 'mid ruins and decay ?
Where others, light and gay of heart, forbear
To follow ; who miss the accustom'd smile,
The wonted tone, and refer the inward
Struggle, and incommunicable thought,
To morbid misery and gloomy change.

The mind o'er-sensitive to suffering
Quails before imputed harshness, fainting
O'er efforts to convey its constancy
And truth, in vain : alas ! its only hold
Of what of hope is left, to cheer it on,
To weave again its web of circumstance
From the poor remnants of its shatter'd guise.
The sufferer feels this rash injustice
More than the milder hardships of his lot,
But adjusts his burden : with feebler hope
Along his solitary way, while fond
Companionship is struggling at his heart,
He gazes on the careless groups around,
Apart from him, each in the fond pursuit

Of happiness, to him denied ; while doubts
Will press upon his diffidence of worth ;
And all his secret solace, to refer
His humble claim to Him who knows the heart.

There are many victims who can never
Make appeal to aught but Heaven. Silent
And stern, in seeming, they pursue their way
Alone ; the busy world regards them not.
They are those who feel the exigencies
Of life ; who cannot share the interest
In its common circumstance, nor express
Emotions over every passing scene.
Their sensibilities lie deeper far
Than ordinary events can reach. Judge
Them not censorious, nor proud ; nor shrink
From their communion, tho' they may seem
Insensible. Follow them in action,
And you may find disinterestedness,
A zeal prompt in the charities of life,
Counsel which profits others in their need,
To track them on their unobtrusive way.
They do the good permitted them, and shrink
From other recompense than it affords,
Unworthy as they feel of fame, or else
Regardless, insensible to its charm.
Of self severe in judgement, they deny
The claim to approbation, and would do
Their best, nor covet notice as reward.

I would not press on any human heart,

And least on one too sensitive to all
That makes existence a long endurance.
Not that it does not yield abundant joy
To him who joins trembling with his mirth. We
Could not survive the slow progressive lapse
Of years, if some choice sweets were not instill'd
As antidotes within the cup of fate.
Sweetest far of all the home affections,
Mutual love, if confidence pervade
The mutual mind, else powerless of good.
'Tis these that make the sum of happiness
In lowly scenes, where few enjoyments lie
Beyond the bounds of home. There are only found
The simple elements which make up the true
If scanty pleasures of the poor: sweeten'd
All by reflection from the kindred smile,
By their contrast with habitual care,
Mutual to all, who feel a common
Interest in a common welfare too.

I would not ask of Heaven a greater boon
Than a consistent and a reverent
Mind, respective of the claims of others;
Conscious, tho' still diffident of my own,
Lest I might invade some plan another
May have form'd, in the common search of life,
Happiness, that shadow fleeting onwards,
As we pursue. I would not for shadows
Intrude on e'en a common privilege,
If I must molest another, burden'd,
And seeking to lay down his load of care,

To lighten him upon the pilgrimage
To be made by all : and if easier by me,
Perhaps more hard by him, thro' success
Unconsciously monopolized by me.
If, as we sometimes may fancy, the goods
Of life be limited, and to be shared
Among mankind, as they may chance to earn
Them, my excess may leave another poor ;
And, in the struggle to acquire, my loss
Is others' gain : then equally I win ;
For I can better bear to lose, than be
The cause of loss to any of my kin
In need ; for full success cannot afford
Relief from suffering ; and 't is sweet to feel
In all emergency, I ne'er have lain
Wilfully a burden, I might have borne,
Upon another, gall'd perhaps like me.

Nothing of woe is so immedicable,
Come in what shape it may, as self-reproach.
It wears all forms, degrees ; subtle to mind
Its serpent folds round every thought, and mix
Its venom with the sweet remembrances
Of early years, ere the heart was conscious
Of a care. We may not escape its sting.
But the pursuit of happiness is vain,
Void of all promise, even to the hope,
Where an analysis of motive, aim,
And purpose, is not made an establish'd
Habit of the mind, preceding action.
'T is wise to cast a rapid glance around

On circumstance and interests ; to trace
With calm perception where temptations lie,
And throw our energy of will at once
To rescue from e'en suspicion our fair
Fame ; content, if poor beside in other things,
With sure exemption from deserved blame.
This gives us freedom from habitual
Fear, distrust of self, far the worst of all.
Doubts may in time arise in other minds
Perplexing judgement ; never in our own.
We pass the erring imputation by,
Invincible to opinion's power,
From conscious purity of word and deed ;
And, leaving to truth her times appointed,
Can gaze on all the warring elements
Around, serene, and reckless of the strife.

But he who values, as above all price,
This conscious peace and purity of mind,
May rarely hope for other perquisites :
Nor need he want, sufficient in itself.
The world will not impute him prosperous,
Nor friends perchance ere deem him overwise.
He cannot make display of affluence
Or fame. His accomplishments in the arts
Of life attract neither praise nor envy.
He must yield precedence oft to others,
While he hears success imputed honour,
The reward of a superior worth ;
Reproaches faintly made at times on him
By implication ; glances, as it were,

Of thought, aside, at his estate ; so poor
And humbly mean in all comparison.
These the trials oft of self-denial,
Fearing to advance too far, and doubtful
Of all claims on fate, beyond the common
Hardships of the poor, the chiefest portion
Of the aspirants which compose the world.
I compassionate the poor. They cannot
Reproach me with their estate. I have no
More than they ; nothing beyond sympathies
To give them in their need. I lack like them
Opportunities to rise, and assert
The dignity of willing energies
To labour diligently, and acquire
More ample means of usefulness and ease.
We have alike our duties to fulfil.
The reward will be proportionate
To fidelity in our trust. There are
Who must be content, in serving, to stand
And wait ; labourers in the market-place
Who are not call'd till the eleventh hour.
Happier they who were permitted early
To toil, and late ; but all have their equal
Recompense. We must nerve ourselves to bear
The fix'd appointments of superior
Wisdom ; yielding where we cannot command.

This scene of trial soon will have a close,
And we shall leave our memories behind,
And our example. The links which bind us
To our kin must sever ; and a broken chain

Will alone remain with those surviving,
To indicate that we have ever been.
I would not have its weight, to those I had
Cherish'd fondly, be oppressive; dragging
Their spirits to the level of the grave
Where my tired limbs have found their last repose.
Love should never prove a burden. It must
Be spontaneous, as an instinct; worn
As we wear the feeling, so pervading!
Of the charms of nature, all-refining
In their influence o'er the mind and heart,
Sensitive to their soft appeal; and while
A tender sorrow melts thro' all the frame,
When the earth closes on a form we love;
For tears are soothing to the aching sense,
Meet tributes on a hallow'd bier; yet I
Would regard a buried love so sacred
As to have its wishes triumph over
Death, and be a source of joy, as it was
In life, when, eloquent in smiles and tone,
It made the earth a paradise to me.

Who, with the love of life, the dread of death,
So fearfully impress'd upon us all,
But feels at times an irresistible
Desire to shuffle off this mortal coil,
And realize the fate beyond the tomb?
I often yield to this delusive wish.
My accomplishments fall so far below
The bright examples I have placed before
My view for imitation, that I shrink

Discouraged at the poor resemblance, nor
Dare to hope success from future effort
To reach the standard of a self-respect.
Who but must wish to rise superior
To the force of habit, that early taint,
Weak'ning the healthy energies of will,
Which a sound experience, time and thought,
Have developed in us, yet impeded
All by obstacles, self-created, ere
The mind, matured, had obtained perceptions
Definite of the fix'd course of duty?
But we must struggle against even hope.
For facilities are unknown to all
In the pursuit of virtue ; and the best
Have fail'd to make themselves familiar
With her haunts. Her paths are over mountains
Rugged, bare, and wearisome ; difficult
Of access ; high above all allurements
Of the vales beneath ; throned in the clear air
And sunny light of an unclouded sky.
It must be gain'd by individual
Toil. Higher elevations rise to view
As we ascend, till the summits vanish
In heaven, of our pilgrimage the end.

'Tis a fatal error, unsuspected
Oft by those who strive to free themselves
From all debasing passion, to suppose
That, of our prone nature, the tendency
Is to rise but by its own inherent
Buoyancy, freed from all inertia,

And unloosed from shackles, that may impede
Its flight above the atmosphere obscure
Of the gross material world. 'T is true,
The universe around, within, is full
Of blest encouragements ; and other minds
May throw their radiance forth to dispel
The mists which darken and distort our view.
But experience, individual,
Self-acquired, wrought out by inward
Effort, shining by its own created
Light, must be the polar star to guide us.
But for it, all is darkness palpable.
The ocean we must traverse still extends,
Without a port, or bay accessible,
To shelter and refit our tossing bark.

The field of knowledge incessantly
Expands. As generations rise and fall,
Successful inroads made in the domains
Of ignorance add new habitable
Ground for science to store up her harvests,
The garner'd products of the seeds of thought
Which take root, and in due time yield their fruit
Abundantly—the nourishment of truth.
But after myriads of active minds
Have plough'd the stubborn earth for its increase,
And thro' successive ages of the world
Been fed, and doubtingly been satisfied,
Leaving a surplus they have not consumed,
For others who succeed ; each hapless child
Of this, the later generation, comes

As feebly furnish'd with capacities
To maintain existence, and, thro' the paths
Of faith and truth, accomplish happiness,
As he whose feeble cry first struck the chord
Of human sympathy ; and in the breast
Maternal woke the echo, ever since
Reverberating thro' the teeming globe.

Life e'en on earth still triumphs over death.
Populous as is the grave, o'er its sod
Tread carelessly increasing multitudes,
Hurrying, and pressing on each other,
Too absorb'd in speculation to think
Of those who tenant it, the earlier
Victims of the same fate which lurks beneath
Delusive promise to deceive again,
And undermine the crumbling sands of hope.
What revelations would be unfolded
From the dark abyss, if we had chemic
Power to sift the dust beneath, and extract
The essence from the crude precipitate
Of earth, to appropriate the perish'd
Secrets that all lie hidden in the tomb !
We have its records. None who die vanish
Away with the last throes of expiring
Consciousness. Some are engraved on hearts
Whose pulsations must beat in unison
With the silenced chord that first awoke
Music in its strings ; or turn to discord
From the jarring conflict of other sounds
And the key-note, for ever mute to them.

Their remembrance is one of feeling, keen,
O'er-sensitive, profitable alone
In suffering, and tells no other tale.
Others are written in calmer language,
Eloquent o'er accomplishments, virtues
Seen thro' the too partial medium
Of affection ; and we learn the homage
Which genius or benevolence has power
To kindle in the soul, susceptible
Of a fond but indiscriminating
Admiration of a character prone
To good, but whose peculiar bias
In the devious paths towards doubt and error
Is obscured to us, or was render'd dark
By the exclusive light concentrated
On the mind observant, which made record
Of some prevailing virtues. Transcripts these
To stimulate to imitation due,
But not reveal for others the secrets
Of a soul, school'd in the stern tasks of life.

The story of the past is never told:
It lies unfolded in the voiceless tomb
Wrapt in the cerements of oblivion,
And no human power can charm the silence
Of, to us, mute, irrevocable death.
We may glean some lapsed fragments
From the heap, but too disjointed, formless,
To restore the structure, into ruin
Fallen ; and we must build anew, rearing
Habitations for ourselves, which will sink

In turn, crumbling away, without a trace
To show to others they have ever been.

We walk o'er ruins, the vast globe itself
But made up of fragments of other worlds.
Its rocks are strewed with wrecks of what once were
Beings sentient in their day. We rend
Them to explore the dark detail, in vain.
Monsters huge, uncouth, strange to nature now,
Startle those observant of her order ;
And conclusions drawn from all her present
Regularity make the past a dream,
Which has no interpreter to explain
To man aught beyond his ignorance,
And the might and wisdom of the Supreme.

Climates and their productions mix confused.
Coral reefs, which now within the tropics
Oft arrest the wanderer on his trackless
Way, strew'd o'er with wrecks beneath the cocoa's
Shade, are found, extinct, to form the firm-set
Battlements of a polar zone, 'gainst which
The heave of ocean, with her pinnacles
Of mountain ice, gigantic, strike in vain.
Relics of animals, vast of size, which
Must have needed nutriment adequate
To sustain their strength and bulk, lie buried
'Neath the surface of high northern plains,
Scanty of verdure from prevailing frost.
Creatures, existent now, have, limb from limb,
With bloody fangs, to appease keen hunger,

Torn the fleshy Mammoth, monster unseen !
Unknown, cradled in annals e'en before
The Flood, hid congeal'd for ages, unchanged
In ice, soluble at last to disclose
To sight, in its fulness of proportion,
The huge structure : marvel beyond compare !
Forests which in luxuriant freshness
Once waved to the sportive air, their leafy
Murmur responsive to the billow's foam,
Which on the pebbly beach once laved their roots,
Now stand monuments, of a primæval
World ! silicified ! on far mountain heights ;
To a distance measureless, the ocean
Backwards hurl'd, with trackless plains, and rivers,
Monarchs of the floods ! intermediate !
And the keen, discerning eye of science
Sees in the wondrous change proofs unerring
Of the subsidence of a former world
Beneath the deep, and an elevation
Subsequent, in the lapse of ages lost,
To solve the marvel to the startled mind.
Vegetable forms, the graceful products
Of some sunny glade, where genial summer
In one unbroken season ruled throughout
The year, are found imbedded, where no heat
Prevails, in frozen regions, whiten'd o'er
With perpetual snow. Types not extant
Now denote successive generations
Pass'd away. Dwellers in the deep profound
Lie scatter'd o'er the mountain range. Huge rocks,
Once impending over alpine summits,

Now, on plains remote, are found, isolate,
Traversing space where valleys now lie scoop'd,
And elevations, intermediate,
Rise, insurmountable !

Hard problems these
To solve ! They amuse the mind, perplexing
It ; tasking ingenuity to lift
The veil which mantles o'er the form of truth.
The effort is beyond our power. 'T is vain
To speculate, and hope that the beauty
It conceals will reward our search with smiles.
We discern but the outward drapery,
And turn idolaters, bending the knee
Submissive, in the worship of a shade.

Time past, all but eternity to thought !
And present, tell equally the same tale
Of wonder. If we seek the evidence,
Not darkly shadow'd forth, of successive
Fiats of Almighty will ; commanding
A creation, which, past away, again
In other form, more complex, is restored,
To perish in its turn, and be replaced
By organization rising higher
In the scale of structure, till at last man,
In the express image of his Maker,
Comes to crown the whole ! he who has left no
Trace of being in the former æras
Of the world—centuries on centuries,
Beyond compute ! with no interpreter

Then of the cause of all! no eye to cast
Its glance on beauty! but conceivable
To us from its coeval dust wrapt round
Like cerements, shrouding its decay; no ear
Attuned to harmony! all sensual!
Save the life which animated nature:
Unless, as fancy may conceive, spirits
Walk'd the earth, invisible and formless,
Rendering homage to the Inscrutable,
Fulfilling duty in communion
With his works, and leaving no trace behind.
'Tis wonder all! oppressive to the mind,
Without the aid of imagination
To give wings to thought, which in its boundless
Range wanders, lost in inextricable
Mazes, without a guide, or clue, or hope,
To escape from the labyrinth involved.

There is but One can lead it to discern
Where order lies, His high omnipotence
Our assurance 'mid the wreck of worlds,
His love our sanction, and His word our bond,
To trust His promise, and obey His will.
We gaze upon his works in awe, reading,
As on a scroll, the nothingness of man,
Dark, vain, presumptuous, where enlighten'd
Not by faith, by humility controll'd.

The laws presiding over former worlds
Equally exert their influence now.
Manifestations all of Deity,

They must be immutable. In extent,
Variety, infinite : changeable
Alone, in seeming, to our short-sighted
Glance ; aghast at miracle ! idly thought
A marvel deviate from an order
Only too vast for us to comprehend.
Its arrangements flow from a common source
Alike consistent ; productive ever
Of effects which harmonize together,
However varied and involved to us.
And in the mind created to observe
Them, should establish confidence and trust,
These pillars of our faith ; sustaining us
Amid the ruin of all earthly things,
Companions of our destiny, save in
Immortal hope.

Decay, part of nature's
Order, is essential to her plan,
Startling the mind, to reassure it
With a firmer trust. The vital principle
Undergoes a change ; transmitted onwards
In new forms of being. Beauty diffused
O'er all. In its young development, so
Ravishing to eye, complete and perfect ;
Without fault in delicate proportion,
In hue, which admit of admiration
Only, the heart's response to all its charm.
Evanescent, it vanishes away,
Leaving us pensive, musing o'er the change,
Void of attraction, to explain the cause.

We feel its fate analogous to ours,
Perishable alike; doom'd not, on earth,
From its nature to endure; too fragile
In all its nicely balanced elements
To withstand the unchanging lapse of time.
It fulfill'd its purpose, answering the soul's
Demand of something to appease its wants,
Some bright reality of its own dreams,
Then fled, leaving a void, thro' which all search
Is vain, suggestive only of despair,
Intolerable to thought; till relief
Is urgent; and we mount on wings of hope
And find it imperishable in heaven.
A principle, enduring in no form,
Unchangeable, subject to no decay.

But all of beauty in external things
Is but the emanation of the mind
Over all that we behold. If the charm
Be amplified, from association,
By the magic lustre reflected back
To us from the smooth sheen of nature's works,
Those master-spells of power, the young, bright
Creations of her will; 't is equally
We see a moral fitness in decay,
Which ministers to use, essential;
A change, productive of the elements
Of reviving power, wakening in the soul
Emotions which shake the worldly fabrics
Of our happiness, as by an earthquake,
Till they crumble into dust; and we build

Anew on foundations as enduring
As the heavens, fix'd permanently there.

Creation, in all its varying forms
And changes, even these too creative,
Breathes a persuasive eloquence, beyond
Capacity of language to convey.
Can it be that those who investigate
Her minute details, of structure, function,
Animal or vegetable, which task
Invention to devise terms adequate
To convey our praise and wonder—can man,
Insensible to the appeal of power,
Infinite and Almighty, and the moral
Of the whole, forget his worship, nor bend
The knee in adoration, prayer and praise?
Humbling himself e'en for the conscious skill
To trace the Source of all ; for that sole end
Entrusted to him, his peculiar good?
Was the light imparted to the kindling
Mind, a delegated ray from the fount
Supreme, intended for a selfish use?
To concentrate its focus on ourselves?
To display, not the stores of nature,
But our importance in her mighty scale?
Enough the privilege to comprehend
Her wonders ; to explore her mysteries ;
To track the link of incongruities
Seemingly disjoin'd, till by a patient
Scrutiny they form one consistent whole
Harmonious ; to eye and intellect

Unfolding whence all order is derived,
Amid the boundless range of existing
Things ; realities inexplicable
To the thoughtless glance of admiration,
Awakening no fit impulse in the mind,
To which they were created monitors.
We must humble ourselves to learn ; couching
The mental orb, obscured, to let in light,
Darken'd by films which intercept the ray
Of knowledge, destined to expand the soul.

Who that reflects upon the destiny
And nature of the soul, that subtle
Essence ! eluding metaphysic skill
To comprehend, can forbear, in eager
Thought, to wander far beyond the narrow
Circumstance of self ; and lose his being,
Interests, in higher contemplations
Than those connected with the passing hour ?
The schemes of happiness are delusive
Which centre in the daily wants of life ;
Perpetually recurring, never
Satisfied. Expectancy from complete
Success is vain, inordinate. We grasp
At shadows when we hope to minister
To our real need by accomplishing
All that interest may prompt us to attempt.
There is but one thing needful. Let us choose
That better part, nor by too much serving
Be cumber'd in the fashion of the world.

I am weary of the gay derision,
The fictitious joys, the heartless pleasures,
The crude, abortive hopes, the vain conceits,
Which pass sufficient in society.
They jar upon me, and a mournful smile
My sole response to all such shallow mirth.
I affect no chaste, discerning judgement,
No capacity to enlighten minds
Misled, and wandering in the groping
Mist of worldliness; my humanity
Is sensible to myself. I but shrink
From association with a lower
Fellowship than my better thoughts demand.
I would aspire to a higher being
Thro' examples worthy imitation,
Of the wise and good. I need inducements
To quicken me to virtue; intellect
To point the way to knowledge; reverence
To awe, gentleness to soothe, modesty
Refine, and pity to compassionate;
Generosity to expand, and justice
To acquit; truth, faith, love, humility,
To disarm a self-reproach, unworthy
Of all pretension to my own respect.
I fret, perceiving others no better
Than myself: frivolities, suggestive
Of my own, thro' weak compliance, sink me
In self-esteem, essential to my peace,
At war continually from its hard
Attainment. If I e'er effect a truce,

An indolent security renders
My defences vain ; and hosts of passions
Rush to the assault, and lead me captive.
Should I ere soothe my servitude with hope,
Or break the bonds which curb my liberty,
Roaming in the free air, without restraint,
Arm'd for surprise, confident against doubt,
Some new calamity will, unforeseen,
Bewilder me, e'en in the fairest haunts
Where peace and beauty dwell habitual,
And I lose my way, blind to all appeal
From objects most familiar to my gaze.

I would not judge the world, as if deeming
Myself above it, seeming to affect
Superiority to aught that breathes.
I mark the excellence, and feel the power
Of many round me ; and a radiance
Fills my mind, encircling it with glory.
A genial glow enkindles in my heart.
I bless existence, and, poor as I am,
Am satisfied, without a conscious want.
If I murmur, it is because the faults
I see perpetually remind me
Of my own, when I long to shut my eyes
On frailty, and gaze, absorb'd on virtue,
That I may grow to what I contemplate.
I would have my mind true to itself, calm.
In its judgements clear, discriminating,
Above all seeming, all self-delusion,
And, instinctively alive to beauty,

In free communion with all holy thought,
In prayer, and praise, and faith habitual,
Incapable of all distrust of God,
His providence, and kind, paternal care.
If, with these desires, I should seem to fling
A sarcasm at the folly of the crowd,
'T is but the sting which rankles in myself,
Indignantly confess'd, far less to wound,
Than relieve a startled sensitiveness,
By the keen inflictions of a judgement,
Stern and relentless, wheresoe'er it fall,
On all perversion of the moral rule.

The worst endurance is to list to those
Who make a mockery of sentiment,
Sneering at virtue in her modest guise,
Turning the o'er-timid aspirations
Of the pure and gentle to derision,
As if the heartless callousness were wit !
How many guileless spirits have been crush'd,
In moments of deep emotion, fearful
To give utterance to some cherish'd thought,
By ridicule,—the senseless scoffer's jest !
If excellence e'er be imitative,
How sad, that aspirations in the young
Should be repress'd by levity or scorn !
The habitual jester violates
The sanctities in that consecrated
Temple, not rear'd of hands, where off'rings
Are laid upon the altar of the heart
In worship of the beautiful and true.

They know not what they do. Their sacrilege
May sap the firm foundations of the mind,
Taking the bloom from thought, which, once removed,
May never be restored ; its fruit blasted
By the canker'd element of decay.

He knows but little of its inward strife,
Its constant struggles, wrestling hard with doubt,
Its faint convictions, void of certainty,
In that imperfect dawn of consciousness,
Before the glow, prophetic of the day,
Who rashly sports with feeling, as a thing
Indifferent, to amuse the passing
Hour. There are observations, often thrown
As if at random, to explore our depth,
Sounding-lines of thought, borne devious oft
By some light under-current of remark,
Which hazards safety, or misleads our way,
Till we miss the beacon where dangers lurk,
And rush confused to meet impending wreck.

The solemn purposes of life oppress
Me : its thoughtless mirth awakes no echo
In my breast, or heard, leaves no impress there
Beyond amazement at the estimate
Of all the moral beauty, spread abroad
As fit inducements to a holy joy.
A cheerful spirit, chastened and refined,
Is in harmony with nature ; the meet
Intelligence from her blest tuition.
Time is too short to be absorb'd in care,

Our sensibilities far too acute
To throb to pain, perversion of effect ;
They were form'd for finer issues : the mind's
Creations, meditative upon life
And all its rich capacities of joy.

In the scheme of Providence there are clouds
Which pass along the blue serene, veiling
The face of heaven, and eclipsing from our view
The source of light ; spreading before the eye
A dull pall, suggestive least of beauty ;
Or arm'd with tempest, fraught with apparent
Desolation, which, in their furious
Rage, pall with alarm the timid gazer,
Startled by their dread resistless sway.
Yet these but the agencies of mercy,
Productive of a varied good to all ;
And the weak alone, from superstition.
Regard them as signs of a relentless
Wrath, kindled to terrify and appal
The world. They shield the quick'ning energies
Of life from over-stimulus ; refresh
The air ; give nutriment to expectant
Beings nursed in the lap of earth, adding
Increase to swell the general store.
Unclouded sunshine would be destructive
Of all promise. And in the moral world
We have vicissitudes analogous,
Fruitful in blessings, rightly understood.
Dark clouds will rise, unbidden, in the mind,
O'ershadowing it, falling in silent
Drops, refreshing to the heart, nourishing

Its bloom ; or the whirlwind gusts of passion
Sweep over it, uncontroll'd, revealing,
Within its mysterious depths, godlike
Capacities, before unknown, fitting
Under due restraint an immortal soul.

The holy attributes of Deity
We profane, blending an impious fear
With our conceptions of Almighty power.
We may fear ourselves, incurring righteous
Judgement for our misdeeds, the penalty
Of disobedience, salutary
To restrain excess, and its dire effects,
Injurious alike to physical
As moral order. Inevitable
The pain consequent on deviation
From our duty. It is the establish'd
Law. Ignorance pleads no exemption,
Nor can accuse but itself as author
Of its woe.

There is a revelation
Known and felt by all, requiring no lore
To comprehend, dependent upon no
Tradition, seeking no authority
In the records of the past, sensible
To instinct, conscience ! that primæval guide,
First monitor ; still authoritative,
Clear and persuasive in its prompt appeals.
It has never been supplanted, nor can
Ever be ; enlarging with the widening

Circle of experience ; enlighten'd,
And expanded more and more by the growth
Of knowledge ; successive acquisitions
Adding but the more impressively
To it ; and whether seated in the rude
Or accomplish'd nature, its monitions
Are audibly heard in the wild tumults
E'en of passion, calmly admonishing
With a clear voice the victim from their sway.

Then wherefore murmurs against Providence ?
We know how transitory is the world.
'T is the lesson of the past. We feel it
In the lapse of time, as each successive
Moment changes the evanescent hues
Of every joy. We see bright creations
Born to fade away, before the impulse
They awake of admiration has ceased
To vibrate o'er the soul. We make response
To beauty, kindled by her smiles, and ere
The tone has died upon the ear, we gaze
On vacancy, in lonely fellowship
With decay and death. Hence necessity
Of faith ; that last accomplishment of mind,
The compensation for every trial,
The odd which makes all even to the thought,
The sole sufficiency ; end of all things
Else ; unattainable by substantial
Good ; a principle immaterial ;
Outweighing in importance wealth of worlds.
Its acquisition vindicates the ways

Of God to man, especial object of his care.
Subtract the due amount of suffering
From intemperance, whether sensual,
Or from an overbalanced state of mind,
Some one affection, faculty or taste,
Preponderating to the injury
Of all, robbing of its due proportion
The character, sway'd by a favourite bias,
And what remains of evil, in our state
Probationary, that a steadfast faith
May not, thro' piety, convert to good ?
It was not ordain'd that we should suffer
From a wanton, or a casual fate ;
Created to be victims of caprice,
Our capacities of discernment check'd
By doubt ; of wisdom to be task'd alone
Within the sphere of temporal concerns,
Eluding our control ; and hope to be
A lure, enticing us astray in chase
Of phantoms, vanishing as we pursue.
Providence implies higher aims than these.
We create the evil we cannot solve.
Our pretensions shadow us with darkness ;
Within the caves of earth, our dwelling-place.
Seeking in vain for light material,
Accorded to the mental eye alone,
Thro' faith, its own bright illumination,
Inferential, radiant from no other
Source.

Who doubts the endurances of life ?
Affects to think them easy to be borne ?

To be charm'd by words, the calm deductions
Of the most enlighten'd reason ? No one
Conversant with humanity, its wants,
Its woes innumerable ; its ceaseless
Sighs and groans of pain ; its throbs of anguish,
And its mute despair. Where may the list'ning
Ear find refuge from the discordant cry
Of misery, bewailing of her woe ?
Where can the eye, in its excursive glance
In search of beauty, exclude the burden'd
Form of sufferance ? or the ravages
Which slow disease and penury have made
On some lone victim, outcast from the ease
And joys of life ; with nothing left of hope,
But death, that agony of dread to all !
Humiliating to the pride of man !
Thankless inheritor of all his goods !
Stern and remorseless in his cold demands !

Death ! how does its silent shroud, its abject
Lowliness, and forgotten dust, accord
With the inflated pomp of circumstance,
So jealously maintain'd and coveted
By man, drunk, and insensate with his draughts
Of vanity ; annihilating all
Of fear that fate can do, to undermine
His charm'd supremacy against its power ?
Insatiable as he is, and dread,
O'ershadowing the world, in its brightest
Promise, with an instinctive fear, fatal
To all peace, nipping the bright germs of hope
Which spring in happy bosoms ; there are those

Who shudder not at his advancing strides,
The bruised and broken spirits, overborne
By sorrow, anxious to lay down the load
Of life, and find relief within the tomb,
To suffer what shall be appointed just
Beyond it ; so submissive to their fate,
That not a fear disturbs the parting hour,
Too sunk to cherish but the wish to die.

The history of the past requires no
Written record. We may read it ever
In the living page of sentient life ;
More eloquently true, elaborate
In detail, more pathetic in effect,
Than in all the labour'd compilations
Of research that fatigue the memory
And oppress the mind. Time, beyond adding
Years to centuries to swell the barren
Sum, affords no other evidence
Than variety of ill to human
Kind, misled by passion, or fatally
Beguiled by confidence in itself :
Forgetful of its nature, so infirm
Of purpose, if left to struggle, hopeless,
Without dependence on a higher Power.
Vain all philosophy without this truth
So comprehensive, meeting all our wants !
The perfect law of liberty ! our sole
Refuge in all emergencies of fate !

There is but one solution of our woe,
The will of God, if our free-agency,

So oft contested, be denied. The fall
Primæval was a gain to man*. Tempted
In the search of knowledge, he disobey'd,
And found the fruits of sin, as his award.
The loss of peace, fierce passions, care, and shame;
The paradise he lost must be regain'd
By virtue; nobler far than innocence
Nursed by indulgence in the lap of ease.
Purity was his dower, Eden his home,
All things created for his wants and use;
But more was needful, and the penalty
Of the transgressing deed is ours: grievous
To bear, but glorious. We have risen
By the fall: our nature now ascendant
Highest in the moral scale, capable
Of good, subduing self, superior
To temptation, living by faith and hope,
Triumphant, while repentance wipes away
All tears, and gives angelic natures joy.

Inevitable then the common doom.
There is no escape from thralldom; no nook
Of earth where flowers and weeds are not combined.
If rich in promise, yet yielding ever
Unprofitable tares which choke the grain,
Sharp thorns which pierce the feet; poisons lurking
'Neath fair allurements tempting to betray,
The subtle venom, unsuspected oft,
Lurking unseen to taint the springs of life.

Yet there is hope. A healing balm is found

* See Mrs. Barbauld's Rhapsody on Evil.

In bitterness. The great Physician
Of the soul has said, "Come unto me, all
That are afflicted; I will give you rest:
My yoke is easy, and my burden light."—
Blest accents! yet because familiar,
Disregarded oft; as the wayward child
Turns from the fond mother's admonitions,
Heedless of her voice; seeking for newer
Counsels, inciting it to delusive
Promise, which smiles but to mislead its way.

How capricious, blind, and inconsistent
Is deceitful man! wandering afar
From his bright convictions to plunge himself
In darkness; clinging to the love of life
Only to reap disgust from its abuse;
At war between lofty aspiration
And low attainment. Winging his joyous
Flight beyond the stars, to bathe his spirit
In the founts of light—sinking prone to earth
To grovel in its dust, oblivious
Of the power to soar, and hold communion
With the just made perfect, who held their path
Above the world, and gain'd their native heav'n.
His fastidious taste rejects wisdom
For its triteness, tho' enshrined in humble
Bosoms, covetous of joy: more precious
From the impress of age; familiar
To all time, and surviving memories
Of annals past, still fresh with youthfulness;

The only immortality below
To guide the soul to its immortal home.

I am sick of the pretence that so fills
The world, for ever restless in pursuit
Of novelty, as if the true essential
Of our search had not been found, with nothing
Left beyond amazement at the novel
Proofs, successively obtain'd, of the old
Philosophy, so rich in proof before !
We have all that reason can accomplish,
All the rare endowments which genius,
From the birth of knowledge to the present
Growth, has e'er display'd ; bright illustrations
Of the majesty of truth in those who
Have pour'd forth their thought in rich floods of light.
To irradiate the obscure : adding
Glory to the old intelligence, felt
And understood by all ; their glowing page
Kindling the flame of sympathy in e'en
Icy bosoms, diffusive of a warmth,
And joy, and admiration ; quick'ning
E'en devotion in those habitual
In piety, and the silent worship
Of the heart : and other minds will proffer,
'Too, the fervour of their inspiration
To succeeding multitudes, swelling more
Loud the voice of praise : yet generations
Will arise and pass away, bequeathing
The exhaustless legacy of knowledge,

From the accumulations of the past,
Centuries beyond compute, to beings
Their survivors ;—and not, of all, the wisest
Then existing can have more to build up
The edifice of faith, than we have now.

It is our duty to explore the vast
Illimitable domain of knowledge ;
Penetrating beyond the discover'd
Country, peopled by adventurous minds
Who have gone forth from among the crowded
Mass to find free space for speculation ;
And each accession adds variety
To illustrate the familiar laws
Of nature, seen under novel phases,
Confirming old conclusions, or throwing
Broader light to amplify and expand
Our view, from a higher elevation
Commanding still a wider horizon,
Indefinitely extending onwards,
Never to end before the mind's research.
But vain the expectation to discern
Aught that can supersede the foundations
Of our hope, as ancient as the pillars
That prop the fabric of the world.
Take any instance of the miracles
Of nature : for of all that we behold
What is not miraculous to our gaze ?
Search even the most familiar object
To its infinite conclusions ; and what
Of the unknown remains to illustrate

The might of the Supreme, his majesty,
His inimitable skill, and our vain
Efforts to comprehend e'en the humblest
Evidence of his condescending love ?

Who, by the most subtle scrutiny, may
Hope to unveil the mystery of life ?
How supported ? its origin and end ?
All its strange variety fading, like
Exhalations, leaving no trace behind.
We ponder o'er the dust, seeking in vain
The spirit that gave it form and being ;
While the void whispers the hidden secret
Of our nature, explicable alone
By death, and the blest miracle beyond.
Have future ages, from the womb of time,
Aught to bring forth that will make pervious
To sight this impenetrable obscure ?
Must new discoveries supplant the old ?
Will flowers from some undiscover'd spot,
Where human foot has never trod, nor eye
Borne witness to the hues which blush unseen,
Defeat the rose ? or surpass in sweetness
The pale jasmin and azure violet ?
And all the vernal gems that neither toil
Nor spin, yet each array'd in its own glory,
Like the lilies of the field, which supplied
The illustration, so profitable
To us all, in our familiar glance
At nature, where we may read homilies
Of the Supreme in mute yet pleading terms ?

Is there a clime in some novel zone fann'd
By purer air ; with a more resplendent
Sun than those of old ? where birds and insects
With lighter wing image to the mind forms
More spiritual than those which have task'd
Admiration from the first dawn of time ?
Will science, in its widening grasp, e'er give
Us explanation of the subtle power
That moves the mechanism invisible
Of the fly ? or gives instinct to the bee ?
Or modes of flight, so varied, yet fitted
To each kind ? or that will trace the chymic
Skill in herbs, elaborating healing
Virtues for the solace and use of man ?

Then vain all hope from mere variety
Of nature's works to inspire true wisdom.
Those already known sufficiently
Suggestive, would man but learn their import,
Nor sigh for knowledge wrapt in the future
Eras of the world, not profitable
More to those observant than his is now.
The spirit which presides o'er all below
Breathed its influence at the creation
On all that was made : and discoveries
Are but the awakenings of the mind
To the amplitude of design and power,
Too vast to be discern'd in the brief life
Of man : nor will countless generations
E'er exhaust the field of observation,
Reaching thro' the infinity of space,

So incomprehensible to our thought !
Yet Providence, mindful of the creatures
It has made, has given each its appointed
Season ; and facts discernible to us
Are the implements of an agency
O'er the mind, as great in power as others,
More diversified, in the lapse of years,
Can ever be ; for true wisdom has few
Elements. It has been reveal'd to babes,
Of whom is the kingdom of heaven, lost
Too oft in the rude contact with the world.

Who can muse o'er nature, nor long to lose
This fretful state of being, and imbibe
The peacefulness that dwells along her glades ?
There living forms of beauty realize
Their capacities of life ; obstacles,
Self-created, like those impeding man,
Unknown in their submission to the laws
Which regulate their state ; instinct their sum
Of knowledge, unerringly suggestive
Of the true ; each accomplishing its meed
Of duty ; and in due mode rendering
Homage silently to the cause of all.
The contemplation of the placid scene
In every mood, how soothing to the soul !
Charms, unobtrusive, there arrest the eye,
Shedding soft influence, beguiling us
Of care, awakening calm perceptions
Of the repose that reigns around, hushing
The voice of passion, or assuaging grief.

We lose the best enjoyments, freely offer'd.
Coop'd up in cities, the abodes of art ;
Where we herd in crowds, jostling each other
In the pursuit of gain ; immersed in cares
That spring from only artificial wants,
Tasking our energies meant for higher
Aims ; usefulness, self-oblivion, love,
Purity and faith, the sole requisites.
We become inextricably involved
In unceasing strife between seeming
Interests and duty, oft conflicting,
While temptations, lurking under specious
Forms, betray ; till we forfeit self-respect,
Gaining the objects of our eager search,
To find them worthless by the loss of peace.
We abandon habits of reflection
Hurried on in the career of a false
Ambition, striving to be great. To win
Attention we stoop to arts unworthy,
Offering hollow seeming in the place
Of truth ; to others false, and wilfully
Deceitful to ourselves. We but become
The victims of our wrong. Success can ne'er
Eradicate the taint of treachery,
Which inevitably stains all virtue
We may show in our exercise of power.

Those who win the world as surely lose all
Else worth the wealth of many worlds to gain.
Fascinated by the charm of power, we
Press on to its attainment, blind to all
Allurement, save the deceitful object

Of our search, far from our elevation
Looking round us elated by success,
Confident of the present, nor doubting
Of the future, arm'd in conscious proof 'gainst
Fate, secure from ill, pleased complacently
With others' admiration of our state,
As if a homage render'd to our worth ;
While we lose all the nobler attributes
Of soul, debased by selfishness and pride,
Basing our hopes on sand, until the poor
Unsubstantial edifice we rear
Of vanity lapses into utter
Ruin, and we lie buried in its fall.

We oft discern o'er the ever-smiling
Scenes of nature, venerable remains
Of art, relics of some former age, all
Picturesque in their hoary battlements,
Worn by time, or left as moral emblems
Of fierce passions, in the rage of strife
Warring to destruction ; and we prize
The massive ruin, searching in annals
Of years long elapsed for the history
Of its might, when within its lofty walls
Power dwelt secure, issuing to make
Its evil or its blessing felt around ;
The feudal baron, or the mitred priest,
Array'd in pomp, perverse of a meek
Religion, lost in the darken'd ages
Of the world.

But who in the crowded haunts

Of men, amid festivities and joy,
Where all seems mirth and gladness, may detect
The living ruins, hidden under smiles,
Which, like sunbeams over festering decay,
Shed no reviving influence beneath?
Hearts, lost to feeling, callous from excess
Of self-indulgence; or, absorb'd by pride,
Harden'd against sympathy with their kind.
Minds goaded by remorse, a prey to woe
Immedicable, some dark remembrance,
Like a lowering cloud, casting its shadow
O'er the thought, with no cheering light around
To animate them on their midnight way.
Natures cast in virtue's mould, by follies
Warp'd from their unresisted sway, taking
The bloom from thought, and strength from character,
Converting life from active usefulness
To scenes of mere frivolity and ease.
Some the prey of passions, beguiled awhile
By reason, to usurp again the rule
When circumstance removes the forced restraint.
Others fond of ease, neglecting duty,
Nor by the pains of its omission school'd,
Or false to their convictions, tho' the truth
Rekurs in lightning flashes to the mind,
But powerless to overcome the force
Of habit, interest or example,
Which make a coward of the will: and life,
Its better purpose turn'd aside, is past
In opposition to the judgement, false
To its faith, reason and all self-respect.

Religion e'en is made to wear a mask.
The worship of the Supreme oft confined
To outward show, a service of the lips
Without the heart, from an acquiescence
To establish'd rule, which a calm judgement
Totally condemns, yet yields its sanction
For convenience, favouring some plan
Of profit, or motive of servile fear.

To him who looks beyond the present scene.
Its poor capacities offering no lure
To charm the eye, with all that it affords
E'en of promise to the hope, this mental
Prostitution, fatal to every
Purpose of existence, is destructive
Equally of the character and life.
There is not beyond enlighten'd reason,
Fearlessly pursued, its dictates our law
Immutable, a safeguard to the mind ;
And to shape our course adverse to its clear
Direction, playing wantonly with truth,
As if denial were a harmless sport
Of intellect, indifferent whether
We refuse or yield assent, is fatal
To all moral growth in beauty, alone
Discernible by a calm rectitude
Of judgement, swerving never from the true.

I would least of all affect an insight
Into duty, denying others' claims
To all respect, tho' differing from me :

As if I had caught the full reflection
From the light of nature, or the mirrors
Which lofty minds have left, as legacies,
To show the pictured image of their thought ;
But what seems only true to me, being
Sought and found, must be my guide and compass,
Tho' the needle vibrates at the slightest
Touch, still to tremble backwards to its pole.
I cannot conceive of order outwards,
Unless the mind, from its consistency,
Has correspondent sympathies to meet
The harmony : and the repose, impress'd
By all the laws of nature, must be vain
To him whose moral sense has no fix'd point
For conscience to exert her power to guide.
Weakest of all the fear to follow on
Adventurous, where truth may lead, as if
Her paths, tho' devious from the beaten
Tract, could conduct to aught but only peace.
Many dread the energy to explore
Untrodden ways, or may doubt the issue,
Tho' unsought impulse prompts to the attempt ;
And flowers, unknown before, invite them,
Whose rare perfume they mistrust for poison,
Or sway'd by others who have backwards turn'd,
Confessing dangers lurking in the way.

But who may safely trust another mind
In search of truth, itself appropriate
To only individual nature ?
Who compass motives perchance unworthy

Imitation? or compare designs
Perhaps most inconsistent with our own?
E'en principles will vary; elements
Of faith, hope have often least resemblance.
What is considered false may still be true
To us. Objects to the crowd can never
From the same angle be discernible;
The view, tho' different, yet still the same,
Foreshorten'd, or in full development,
Or else curtail'd by some defect of light.

The variety we see in outward
Aspect, no two forms alike, tho' so few
The features that compose expression,
Yet ever individual in size,
Proportion, and combined effect, in mind
Must equally exist, all whose subtle
Elements elude our computation.
Worse than hopeless then the attempt to find
Uniformity of thought and feeling
On any subject which demands our care.
Hence necessity of toleration
In religion, its varied creeds and rites!
A theme too nicely scann'd in our belief,
Too fitly moulded to the inward sense,
To be squared by rule, and made
Adapted to the universal mind.
It alone can profit where its doctrine
Springs from our convictions, and where its rule,
Acknowledged by the heart, sways each impulse
There, making life a service to the faith,

Inseparably join'd, a freedom felt
From all conscious absence of control.

The restraint imposed on the assenting
Will, thro' moral obligation based on
Piety, is the only freedom known ;
All else implies a bondage o'er the mind.
The constraint of passions which have never known
The curb, the world's example, so potent
To mislead—opinion, universal
Judge, or fashion enticing to us all.
These still may be permitted guides, tho' oft
Delusive, and without some previous
Standard to refer our judgement, we fail
To follow but in the general wake,
Impell'd by forces greater than our own.
But under such protection, we pursue
Our way in peace, fearless of all censure,
Whether lone, or blended in the mass,
For we but follow where we else should lead.

There is no real life where liberty
Is not, as the air we breathe, our birthright,
Part of our very being, essential
To its every need ; and without which .
We die to all the nobler purposes
Of existence ; body without a soul.
We have no perfect law conferring it,
Save that religion graves upon the heart.
The eye by which we read the commandments
Of our faith ; thro' which it is our duty

In all time,—the only Sabbath ! to search
The scriptures, the only ritual left ;
Making our worship to be coeval
With intelligence, and coexistent
Ever with our thoughts, our deeds and motives.
We only thus fulfill the injunction
To prefer our orisons in spirit
And in truth, conforming all the nature
To the service of the Supreme, himself
A spirit, seeking such to worship him,
Consistently with the life and virtue.
There must be no hallucination here,
No fond delusion, as if time or place
Prescribed were adequate to a service,
Demanding every moment of our care,
Which admits no pause, jealous to require
All things at our hands, to be incessant
At our labour, with undivided zeal,
Faithful to our duty, but free in will,
To accomplish all within our power,
But only in the livery of our bond.

There are who limit worship to an hour,
Ascribing sanctity to place and time,
Investing man, as erring as ourselves,
With anointed power, and earthly structures
As the shrines peculiar to our trust.
They consider these as holy, blending
Them with their conceptions of religion,
A thing apart from ordinary life,
From the familiar scenes of nature ;

Putting a curb occasionally
On the will to restrain its tendencies,
To leave it free or loosed, when most it needs
Control, in the daily rounds of duty,
Where temptations lie at every turn
To make the world exclusive to our view.

But who observant of the mind may hope
To force its eager sympathies, making
Them obedient to control, changing
Direction, to suit some formal plan ?
Or compel the stubborn heart to forgo
Its privilege, and be subservient
To establish'd rule ? who force conviction
On the judgement, tho' the plea be urgent,
Sanction'd by authorities in all time ?

Sufficient what is sanction'd to each mind,
That meets consent instinctive to the thought,
Gives energy to principle, quickens
Faith, and satisfies the claims of duty.
If forms can aid, however profitless
To those who abstain from their observance ;
Or if stated times incite to deeper
Meditation, these all are holy rites,
By their effects and uses justified.
But difference of mode or influence
Imply nor want nor excess of credence,
Authorizing least uncharitable
Imputations, as if superstition
Or the infidel doubt usurp'd the thought.

Such rash aspersions ever poison peace,
Sow the rank seeds of discord thro' the world,
Embittering social intercourse ;
Fixing on amiable characters,
Touch'd with every grace, suspicions foul.
Painful alike to hear, unjust and false.

Strange ! that a principle so refining
As religion, blending with all our best
Affections, itself the source of every
Virtue, the connecting link between earth
And heaven, allying man to the just
Made perfect, the angelic host, who know
No other thought than piety, the sole
Expression of a life spiritual
In the presence of the Supreme,—most strange !
That such a feeling, meant to purify
The grosser elements of our nature,
To soften every passion, to refine
And elevate the soul, should in gentle
Bosoms e'en be oft associated
With illiberal zeal and rancorous hate,
Because minds as pure and conscientious
As their own adopt a different sense
On subjects which admit of no consent
Common to all who profess a common
Faith, enjoy equally the promises
Of a common hope, putting their equal
Trust in the common providence of God !

But however painful to the candid

Nature the censure of the world may be,
There is a claim above the world's regard,
Its principalities and powers, the mind
Itself, its conscientious thought, which must
Be satisfied. Tho' it be isolate
From all human sympathy, it will find
Meet favour where it must alone be sought.
We have our guidance; not every zealot
Whom we meet, oracular in judgement,
Who expounds the law, nor admits a doubt
Of what he deems truth, sinning against all
Judgement in his ignorance of its first
Element, charity, and above all,
Humility, the essence of all truth.
We have our guidance: the great example
To our faith, whose compassion is our best
Assurance in the hope of acting well
Our part by prayer and meditation;
Nor need we fear, supported by his love,
Familiar with his precepts, kindling
Piety by communion of the heart
And mind with the Father of our spirit,
The busy condemnation of the world.
Alas for human blindness! how many
Pride themselves on religious truth in vain,
Professing it in all humility
Of language, to deny it in the life!
They nourish strange delusions with strange creeds.
All who differ from them condemn'd to die
Without compassion and without a hope!

Who, weary with disgust of bigotry,

But sighs to find some favour'd nook of earth
Where charity might dwell without alarm
From outrage, sharpen'd by fanatic zeal ?
That blest retreat is yet denied to all.
There is no refuge from the poison'd shafts
Of keen intolerance : not an effort
Made to soften human woe, but the herd
Of zealots question the intent, unless
The clang of fetters, forged to bind the thought,
Be heard to blend their discord with the deed.
Goodness has no exemption from their rage,
Benevolence no plea, nor innocence
Protection : recreation is a sin ;
A cold formality, so destructive
To free developement of character,
Advocated, but to deform the life.

But evil, whatsoever shape it wear,
And none more hideous than bigotry,
Has moral tendencies. Life is no scene
Of easiness and sport, where careless hearts
Re-echo sounds of mirth to glad appeals,
Responsive, in peaceful glades, where cloudless
Skies throw radiance on unfading bloom.
We must wrestle with contention, seeking
Repose awhile to renovate our strength
To meet opposing obstacles. The world
Has high attractions, full of nobleness
And power, bright examples of excelling
Virtue : but it has its shades. When these wear
Upon the spirit, presenting objects
Of discouragement to depress the mind,

We shrink within to hold communion
With the idols of our thought, imaged forms
Which imagination decks with light, caught
From inspiration of the wise and good ;
Or we fly to nature in her silent
Haunts, there to contemplate the beautiful,
Which abstracts us from ourselves, supplanting
Self by the higher aspect of perfection ;
And the glow of disinterested thought
Thus communicated kindles within
The energies unknown of sacrifice,
Calm and irresistible in their power,
Fruitful in every virtue, suggestive
Of a courage, force and elevation,
And a sympathy far above our own*.

'Tis wise in us to leave the busy throng
Of worldly interests, inimical
To peace, where hollow councils fall so far
Below the standard of our hope, and where
Examples sap the confidence we place
In virtue, conscious that we have resource
In nature to reassure the spirit
Depress'd and doubting of its plans of joy.
There is no other solace in the rude
Collisions of society, in which
We seldom meet the sympathies we need.
Our thoughts estranging us from the gayer
Crowd, absorb'd in objects unfamiliar
To our taste, or unaccordant, making

* Constant, *Mélanges de Littérature*, p. 176.

Our being an exception to the rule.
We forget the energies which abound
Throughout creation, not more without
Than in the deep recesses of the mind,
Which may be made the firm abode of thoughts
Excursive in their range o'er every theme
Of glory, with imagination prompt
And unconfined to guide their pathless way.
Inheritors of exhaustless power,
It is the thankless only from supine
Forgetfulness, who bemoan their state, blindly
Indifferent to capacities, which
Might enable them to rise by faithful
Effort to the highest comprehension,
The attributes sublime of Deity,
Impress'd on all which the eye observant
Can glean within its boundless range of view.

Who, pure of purpose, with his mental eye
Directed to impending destiny,
Reveal'd, inevitable, imminent,
Will e'er debase the dignity of hope
Which knows no conscious limit to its flight?
The misery we feel we oft create,
Our happiness so lowly placed on chance,
That any change of circumstance affects
Us, well or ill, as the prevailing thought
Fix'd on no firm foundation may decide;
Looking abroad with restless search for good
When we have chymic power to separate
Sweets e'en from all the bitterness of fate.

For we are but "pipes for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please," tho' melody,
Beyond the concord of known sounds, is ours,
If discord were not made to vibrate
From our lack of skill to bring forth the tone.

CONCLUDING SONNET.

My dream has pass'd ! Tho' a changeable one,
It has beguiled some weary hours of night
And morn away. I at least have no right
To quarrel with it, having served my turn.
Like most fancies, which only profit those
Who indulge them, mine will prove tedious
In recital. Yet I am serious
In the belief that all who may choose
"To ponder fitly," will find themselves, if
Not better, wishing to be so. I fear
Some may look grave, or stern o'er errors here
And there discernible, and others stiff:
But I cannot see why thoughts should not be
Free, if honest, tho' all may not agree.

THE END.

PRINTED BY RICHARD AND JOHN E. TAYLOR,
RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET.





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